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THE FIVE TALENTS OF WOMAN.

THE FIVE TALENTS OF WOMAN

A BOOK FOR GIRLS AND WOMEN

BY

The Author of

**"HOW TO BE HAPPY THOUGH MARRIED," "MANNERS
MAKYTH MAN," Etc., Etc**

Simon John Girty

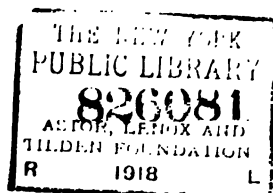
"He gave five talents."

*THE
FIVE
TALENTS
OF
WOMAN*

New York

CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS

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TO WHOM CAN A BOOK FOR GIRLS AND WOMEN BE BETTER
INSCRIBED THAN TO THEIR WISE ADVISER
JOHN RUSKIN?
TO HIM AND TO MY WIFE I DEDICATE
THE FOLLOWING PAGES.





PREFACE.

BELIEVING as I do that the proper study of man is *woman*, I have devoted to it much of my time, and the result, such as it is, may be found in the following pages. They do not, of course, contain anything unsaid before, for woman being one of our oldest institutions, has benefited or suffered in all ages from description and definition. One of these definitions is that she is "a good idea—spoiled." With the first part of this I cordially agree, and my happiness would be great if this book could, in even a single instance, prevent the latter part from being realized. Shall I be considered old-fashioned and reactionary if I confess to the conviction that the truest and noblest function of a woman is to be a wife and mother, and that her best friends are those who most appreciate woman's special work—the direction of the household, the care of the young and sick? At the same time, I

do not shut my eyes to the number of women who cannot be wives and mothers, or think that they must necessarily be superfluous. Who does not know women who are happy though single, and to be ranked among the most useful members of society?

Nor have I any sympathy with those good old times for silly women when the mixing of a posset made them virtuous, and skill in antimacassars an ornament to their sex; when the rouge-pot and the milliner paved the way to man's heart, and the kitchen and the cupboard to his esteem; when lack of logic was their privilege, and lack of learning their duty; when they were brought up to believe and not to reason, as Napoleon I. is said to have advised, and so became open to all sorts of error; when empty of culture, they were full of caprice, and void of mind were replete with malice. The cultivation of a woman's mind cannot be carried too high, but it must be a cultivation proper to her, to her constitution, her marked gifts, her work in the world. Woman is equal to man! Yes, but equal by being herself, and not a pale copy of him!

In B.C. 430, a wise Athenian statesman said, "That woman discharges her duty best who is least talked about for good or evil amongst men." Even now some of us are of this opinion.

If it be asked why should the word "talent" be applied to housekeeping, I reply that there are born housekeepers, just as there are born authoresses and born musicians, and in the chapters that follow I have not restricted the gifts or talents of women to housekeeping. Indeed nearly everything that concerns woman is more or less closely connected with

what are here called her five talents. This will account for my having included one or two subjects less apparently connected.

"Why," asked a lady of an old judge, "why cannot a woman become a successful lawyer, I'd like to know?" "Because," said the judge, "she's too fond of giving her opinion without pay." I hope that I may not be falling into this snare, and giving advice to girls and women without pay. If they are as kind as they are said to be, they will save me from doing so by buying my book. It is true that women just now are asking for their "rights" rather than for advice, and may be as little grateful for that cheap commodity as was a certain Spanish beggar. "In heaven's name, give me aid!" he ejaculated to an English gentleman. "Aren't you ashamed to beg—a great, strong, healthy fellow like you?" "Senor, I asked you for alms, not for advice."

If even Mr. Ruskin has to confess, "Nobody ever minds a word I say, except a few nice girls, who are a great comfort to me, but can't do anything"—if a teacher like Mr. Ruskin has thus to complain, how can I hope for a hearing? I must only trust to the "few nice girls."





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CHAPTER I.

THE FIVE TALENTS OF WOMAN.

"Women were designed by their nature, elegance, and softness to endear domestic life to man, to make virtue lovely to children, to spread around them order and grace, and to give to society its highest polish. No attainments can be above beings whose end and aim it is to accomplish purposes at once so elegant and so salutary ; every means should be used to invigorate by principle and culture such native excellence and grace."—*Fénelon*.

"Duties high, noble, silently important as any that can fall to a human creature, duties that, if well discharged, constitute woman in a soft, beautiful, almost sacred way, Queen of the World, and which, by her natural faculties, graces, strength, and weaknesses, are every way indicated as especially hers."—*Carlyle*.



F women have been given special work to do in the world we may be sure that they have received talents which fit them for that work. Exceptional women may have other talents, but almost every woman has a natural adaptation

or talent for the five classes of duties which Mr. Ruskin says are

included in woman's work. The five talents of women are those which enable them :

1. To please people.
2. To feed them in dainty ways.
3. To clothe them.
4. To keep them orderly.
5. To teach them.

Do we hear some "intense" young lady who goes in for high art and objects to bring her philosophy down to the kitchen—do we hear her say that these are humdrum, old-fashioned duties, and that women have talents for better things than these? We answer that there is no work in the world higher than what is here described as woman's work. Because women's work is done for the most part in the privacy of home, we are not for that reason to undervalue it, or to regard it as of less importance than the more public work of men. Indeed, it would have been impossible for men to have done their work without women. Shakespeare, Bacon, Goethe, Wellington, what would they have been without their mothers? Even if we could imagine them to have been born without these necessary antecedents, we cannot believe that they could have been what they were and could have done what they did without the early nursing and training of their mothers. Shakespeare's mother could not have written *Hamlet*, but she—perhaps she alone—could and did produce Shakespeare. The same may be said of Goethe's mother. A man's fate depends on his mother much more than on his father. A general wins a battle, but he could not have done it if he had not been fed,

clothed, and taught, most of which was done by women. A great statesman goes down to the House to bring in an important Bill. He is encouraged by a wife's smile as he leaves his home; he is fortified by the good dinner she ordered; the shirt he wears was washed by a woman; his mind was made orderly and received its first training from his mother. Is the country more indebted to men than to women for the new law?

At a woman's rights meeting lately held in America, an amazon is reported to have sounded the tocsin as follows:—

“Miss President, fellow-women, and male-trash generally, I am here to-day for the purpose of *discussing* women's rights, *recussing* her wrongs, and *cussing* the men. I believe sexes were created perfectly equal, with the woman a little more equal than the man. I believe that the world would to-day be happier if man never existed. As a success man is a failure, and I bless my stars my mother was a woman. (Applause.) I not only maintain these principles, but maintain a shiftless husband besides. They say man was created first; well, s'pose he was, ain't first experiments always failures? The only decent thing about him was a rib, and that went to make something better. (Applause.) And they throw in our faces about Eve taking an apple. I'll bet five dollars that Adam hoisted her up a tree, and only gave her the core. And what did he do when he was found out? True to his masculine instincts he sneaked behind Eve and said: ‘’Twasn't me, 'twas her,’ and women had to father everything, and mother it too. What we want is the ballot, and the ballot we're bound to have, if we have to let down our back hair, and swim in a sea of gore. (Sensation.)”

I believe that women would lose power and influence if they had votes, but I have not the slightest personal objection to their having them, though why they should swim in a sea of gore to gain a thing which men value little, and often do not use, is difficult to understand. It seems to me that women should be as free as men are to enter every profession and every University. Why not? Those unsuited for any particular occupation will either not enter it or soon be driven out of it by that great settler of things—competition. And we may be sure that the best women will continue to cultivate the five talents of which this book treats.

Most of us, however, will agree with Mr. Ruskin that it is foolish to speak of the "superiority" of one sex to the other, as if they could be compared in similar things. Each has what the other has not; each completes the other and is completed by the other; they are in nothing alike, and the happiness and perfection of both depends on each asking and receiving from the other what the other only can give. The man's power is active, progressive, defensive. He is eminently the doer, the creator, the discoverer, the defender. Woman's powers are not intended for inventing and making, but for sweet ordering and arranging. Her great function is praise; she enters into no contest, but infallibly adjudges the crown of contest.

"A man's work for his own home is to secure its maintenance, progress, and defence; the woman's to secure its order, comfort, and loveliness." But both men and women have public duties as well as private, and ought not selfishly to confine themselves to the latter. "The man's duty," continues Mr. Ruskin, "is to assist in the maintenance, in the advance, in the

defence of the State. The woman's duty is to assist in the ordering, in the comforting, and in the beautiful adornment of the State. What the woman is to be within her gates, as the centre of order, the balm of distress, and the mirror of beauty, that she is also to be without her gates, where order is more difficult, distress more imminent, loveliness more rare."

"The rights of women, what are they?
The right to labour and to pray,
The right to comfort in distress,
The right, when others blame, to bless."

These lines recall Ethel Lynn's beautiful stanzas, entitled
"Woman's Kingdom"—

"Reaching high,
Its walls rise upward to the sky,
For weary souls who crave her aid,
For frightened souls, sin-sick, afraid,
While she beside the postern stands
To hold up weak and weary hands.

Her throne, the hallowed chamber where
Her child is taught its evening prayer;
Her crown, a good man's steadfast love,
Pure gold that fire shall only prove;
Her warders, only loving prayers,
To guard the feet of stumbling cares;

Her tribute, loving hearts and true;
Her orders, Faith's broad ribbon blue.
Decked with the cross, and starry Hope
Borne on a shining anchor up."

High as this throne is, the steps that lead up to it may be reached by every girl and woman, for they are the five duties

which women are especially fitted to perform—pleasing, feeding, clothing, keeping orderly, and teaching people. No one will deny that these duties belong to woman's sphere, whatever else that wonderful sphere may contain, and indeed it is practically without a limit.

“ There's not a place in earth or heaven,
There's not a task to mankind given,
There's not a blessing or a woe,
There's not a whispered yes or no,
There's not a life, or death, or birth
That has a feather's weight of worth,
Without a woman in it.”

Preaching lately in a fashionable West End London church, a young curate, who had more zeal than knowledge of life, addressed the female portion of the congregation, and used these words: “ Even you, my sisters, though *only women*, may yet find *some* duty to perform.” “ Evidently his mother had failed in hers,” said the lady who heard and reported this odd remark. “ Only women,” as if any earthly being is higher than a woman; “ some duty,” as if woman's work in the world were not quite as important as that of men. Of the realm of home woman is the queen; home takes its cue and its hue from her. If she be in the best sense womanly—if she be true and tender, loving and heroic, patient and self-devoted—she consciously or unconsciously organizes and puts in operation a set of influences that mould the destiny of the nation. Woman was needed in Eden—how much more on this thorny world outside? Physically the vessel is weak, but in that very weakness her strength lies. Knowledge is power in man's department; gentleness is power in woman's.



CHAPTER II.

THE POWER OF A WOMAN'S SMILE.

“ ‘ Was she beautiful ? ’ I said,
‘ That so many hearts were led
To her feet ?
Was her mind of rarest kind,
Depth and brilliancy combined,
Thus complete ? ’

“ ‘ No ; not beautiful nor wise
More than thousands whom we prize ;
But her smile
Was like sunshine in a room
That before was filled with gloom
All the while. ’ ”

—*Anonymous.*



T is related in the life of a celebrated mathematician, William Hutton, that a respectable-looking countrywoman called upon him one day, anxious to speak with him. She told him, with an air of secrecy, that her husband behaved unkindly to her, and sought other company, frequently

passing his evenings from home, which made her feel extremely unhappy; and knowing Mr. Hutton to be a wise man, she thought he might be able to tell her how she should manage to cure her husband. The case was a common one, and he thought he could prescribe for it without losing his reputation as a conjuror. "The remedy is a simple one," said he, "but I have never known it to fail. *Always greet your husband with a smile.*" The woman expressed her thanks, dropped a curtsy, and went away. A few months afterwards she waited on Mr. Hutton with a couple of fine fowls, which she begged him to accept. She told him, while tears of joy and gratitude glistened in her eyes, that she had followed his advice, and her husband was cured. He no longer sought the company of others, but treated her with constant love and kindness.

For good or evil the power of a woman's smile is very great. It is the outward and visible sign of a talent of pleasing which she has received to enable her to be an influence for good in the ordering and government of the world. Men are very much what women make them, and it is by rightly using their talent of pleasing that women can make men what they ought to be. The man at the head of the house can mar the pleasure of the household, but he cannot make it; that must rest with the woman, and it is her greatest privilege. It is one of the duties of women to beautify the world, and especially their own homes and their own persons, to arrange the furniture and ornaments of their rooms tastefully, and generally to give a touch of seemliness to that part of the world with which they have to do.

Who does not agree with Victor Hugo when he says,

"There is in this world no function more important than that of charming? The forest glade would be incomplete without the humming-bird. To shed joy, to radiate happiness, to cast light upon dark days, to be the golden thread of our destiny, the spirit of grace and harmony—is not this to render a service? Here and there we meet one who possesses the power of enchanting all about her; her presence lights up the house, her approach is like a cheering warmth; she passes by, and we are content; she stays awhile, and we are happy. She is the Aurora with a human face. Is it not a thing divine to have a smile which, none know how, has the power to lighten the weight of that enormous chain which all in common drag behind them?" Even virtue when coupled with a disagreeable manner may offend, and it is not very easy to answer that question which a child is reported to have asked the other day: "Mother, what part of heaven do people go to who are good but not agreeable?"

When a woman does not please she fails to do the work for which she was created. And how is she to please? By the beauty of her body, her mind, and her conduct, including manner and temper. We have never been able to see why moralists should bear a grudge to good looks. With Mr. Herbert Spencer, we think that the saying that beauty is but skin-deep is but a skin-deep saying. It is the intention of nature that physical beauty should have the power of attracting admiration. She means it to be a guide to the desirability, so far as race-preservation is concerned, of any man or any woman as a partner in marriage. A fine form, a good figure, a beautiful bust, a round arm and neck, a fresh complexion, a lovely face,

are all outward and visible signs of the physical qualities that on the whole conspire to make up a healthy and vigorous wife and mother.

The first duty, then, of a woman is to secure for herself such physical training and exercise as may confirm her health, and perfect her beauty ; the highest refinement of that beauty being, to quote Mr. Ruskin, "unattainable without splendour of activity and of delicate strength. To perfect her beauty, I say, and increase its power ; it cannot be too powerful, nor shed its sacred light too far : only remember that all physical freedom is vain to produce beauty without a corresponding freedom of heart."

Indeed there cannot be a high order of even physical beauty where indications of mental and moral efficiency are wanting. Talleyrand once said of a lovely woman that "beauty was her least charm." A good-humoured face is in itself almost pretty. A pleasant smile half redeems unattractive features. Intelligence and goodness are almost as necessary as health and vigour to make up our ideal of a beautiful human face and figure.

"A countenance in which do meet
Sweet records, promises as sweet."

The perfect loveliness of a woman's countenance can only consist in that majestic peace which is founded in the memory of happy and useful years,—full of sweet records ; and the hope of better things to be won and to be bestowed,—promises as sweet.

Even small-pox is not as great a foe to beauty as sin. "The hand that hath made you fair hath made you good ; the good-

ness that is cheap in beauty makes beauty brief in goodness ; but grace being the soul of your complexion should keep the body of it ever fair." No cosmetics are so capable of enhancing beauty as the smile of good-temper and a desire to please. Beauty of expression is, more than any other form of loveliness, capable of cultivation.

" La vie habituelle fait l'âme,
Et l'âme fait la physionomie."

A woman may not have perfectly regular features, but her face will be so lit up with the beauty of goodness that she cannot fail to please if she strive to obey the spirit of some such rules as the following, which may be multiplied or diminished according to particular cases.

1. Learn to govern yourselves, and to be gentle and patient.
2. Guard your tempers, especially in seasons of ill-health, irritation, and trouble, and soften them by prayers and a sense of your own shortcomings and errors.
3. Never speak or act in anger until you have prayed over your words or acts, and concluded that Christ would have done so in your place.
4. Remember that, valuable as is the gift of speech, silence is often more valuable.
5. Do not expect too much from others, but forbear and forgive, as you desire forbearance and forgiveness yourself.
6. Never retort a sharp or angry word. It is the second word that makes the quarrel.
7. Beware of the first disagreement.
8. Learn to speak in a gentle tone of voice.

9. Learn to say kind and pleasant things whenever opportunity offers.

10. Study the characters of each and sympathize with all in their troubles, however small.

11. Do not neglect little things if they can affect the comfort of others in the smallest degree.

12. Avoid moods and fits and fits of sulkiness.

13. Learn to deny yourself and prefer others.

14. Beware of meddlers and tale-bearers.

15. Never charge a bad motive if a good one is conceivable.

16. Be gentle and firm with children.

The last rule refers to children, but often a husband is far more difficult to manage. If, however, a wife can keep her temper, and persevere in her efforts to please, she will in the end conquer by kindness.

Zechariah Hodgson was not naturally an ill-natured man. It was want of reflection more than a corrupt and ungenerous heart that led him to consider his wife in the light of an inferior being, and to treat her more like a slave than an equal. If he met with anything abroad to ruffle his temper his wife was sure to suffer when he came home. His meals were always ill-cooked ; and whatever the poor woman did to please him was sure to have a contrary effect. She bore his ill-humour in silence for a long time, but finding it to increase she adopted a method of reproving him for his unreasonable conduct which had the happiest effect.

One day, as Zechariah was going to his daily avocation after breakfast he purchased a large cod-fish and sent it home, with

directions to his wife to have it cooked for dinner. As no particular mode of cooking was prescribed, the good woman well knew that whether she boiled it, or fried it, or made it into a chowder, her husband would scold her when he came home. But she resolved to please him once if possible, and therefore cooked portions of it in several different ways. She also, with some little difficulty, procured an amphibious animal from a brook at the back of the house, and put it into the pot. In due time her husband came home; some covered dishes were placed on the table, and with a frowning, fault-finding look the moody man commenced the conversation.

"Well, wife, did you get the fish I bought?"

"Yes, my dear."

"I should like to know how you have cooked it. I will bet any money you have spoiled it for my eating. (Taking off a cover.) I thought so. Why in the world did you fry it? I would as soon eat a boiled frog."

"Why, my dear, I thought you preferred it fried."

"You did not think any such thing. You knew better. I never liked fried fish. Why didn't you boil it?"

"My dear, the last time we had fresh fish you know I boiled it, and you said you liked it better fried. I did it merely to please you; but I have boiled some also." So saying, she lifted a cover, and lo, the shoulders of the cod nicely boiled were neatly deposited on a dish; a sight which would have made an epicure rejoice, but which only added to the ill-nature of her husband.

"A pretty dish this!" exclaimed he. "Boiled fish, chips, and porridge. If you had not been one of the most stupid of womankind, you would have made it into a chowder."

His patient wife, with a smile, immediately placed a tureen before him containing an excellent chowder.

"My dear," said she, "I was resolved to please you. There is your favourite dish."

"Favourite dish, indeed!" growled the discontented husband. "I daresay it is an unpalatable, wishy-washy mess. I would rather have a boiled frog than the whole of it."

This was a common expression of his, and had been anticipated by his wife, who, as soon as the preference was expressed, uncovered a large dish at her husband's right arm, and there was a bull-frog of portentous dimensions and pugnacious aspect, stretched out at full length.

Zechariah sprang from his chair, not a little frightened at the unexpected apparition.

"My dear," said his wife, in a kind, entreating manner, "I hope you will at length be able to make a dinner."

Zechariah could not stand this. His surly mood was finally overcome, and he burst into a hearty laugh. He acknowledged that his wife was right, and that he was wrong, and declared that she should never again have occasion to read him such a lesson, and he was as good as his word.

If a woman is agreeable we may be sure that she began to learn the art of pleasing when she was a girl, and therefore we would say to girls, Try always to be natural, to forget self, to be gracious toward every one. If asked to sing or play, comply at once, if it is in your power to do so. Be scrupulously neat in dress. Avoid disagreeable habits. Never interrupt any one because he is telling you a tiresome story. You can bear the infliction much better than he can endure the wound his vanity

will receive. Always acknowledge an acquaintance, if worthy of your respect, no matter where he is, or however shabby his clothes may be. The young girl who has a polite bow, a smile, and a pleasant word for every one, will be blessed with many friends. Above all, learn to be true-hearted and sincere.

In a New Zealand cemetery on a gravestone is to be found, with the name and age of the dead, the words, "She was so pleasant!" What a delightful character she must have been to have an epitaph like that! It makes one think that a choir of nightingales is perched upon her grave, and singing melodious chants to her memory.

"She was so pleasant" that friends used to come first to her in seasons of sorrow and sickness for help and comfort; one soothing touch of her kindly hand worked wonders in the feverish child; a few words let fall from her lips in the ear of a sorrowing sister did much to raise the load of grief that was bowing its victim down to the dust in anguish. Her husband would come home worn out with the pressure of business, and feeling irritable with the world in general; but when he entered the cosy sitting-room, and saw the blaze of the bright fire, and met the smiling face of this sweet-minded woman, he would succumb in a moment to the soothing influences which were like balm of Gilead to his sinking spirits. The rough school-boy fled in a rage from the taunts of his companions to find solace in his mother's smiles; the little one, full of grief with his own large trouble, found a haven of rest on her breast. All these and many others who felt the power of her woman's smile, mourn for her now that she has gone, because "she was so pleasant."

Unhappily, all women are not so pleasant. Some of them have bad temper, which "is a jar of vinegar, wherein all the pearls of household happiness become dissolved."

"I once knew a wife," says the author of "Courtship and Matrimony," "and all the pleasure she seemed to have on earth was to vex the good man who was so unfortunate as to be her husband. One night he came home rather later than usual, and he found a bright fire glowing in the kitchen grate, but no wife. She had disappeared, he knew not whither. He sought her upstairs, and he sought her down. Great part of the night he wandered the streets in search of her ; but all to no purpose. Well might his search prove ineffectual, for all the time he was endeavouring to obtain tidings of her, strange to say, she was in her own house, where she lay concealed in a small recess in the kitchen, so small, indeed, that it was truly astonishing how she had managed to creep in ; and in this small recess, purposely to vex and perplex her poor husband, she sat all night with her knees cooped up on a furnace pot, like a hen on its nest, and never once cackled to let her good man know her whereabouts ! Oh, she was a Tartar !

" ' Sic a wife as Willie had,
Ah wadna gie a button for her.' "

One can bear with a woman who is only peevish when the wind is in the east, but it is unbearable to live with one who is peevish in every point of the compass.

"I feel so miserable again this morning," said a complaining wife. "Yes," replied her exasperated husband, "you wouldn't be happy if you weren't miserable all the time." The first and

most important quality in woman is sweetness of temper. Heaven did not give to the fair sex insinuation and persuasion, in order to be surly ; it did not make them weak, in order to be imperious ; it did not give them a sweet voice, in order to be employed in scolding ; it did not provide them with delicate features, in order to be disfigured with anger. A wife frequently has cause to lament her condition, but never to utter bitter complaints. A husband too indulgent is apt to make an impertinent wife, but, unless he be a monster, sweetness of temper in his wife will restore him to good humour, and soon or late triumph over him.

Now and then you meet with one so exactly formed to please that she will gain upon every one that hears or beholds her. This disposition is not merely the gift of nature, but frequently the effect of much knowledge of the world and a command over the passions. "A thousand nameless things which nobody can describe, but which everybody feels, conspire to form that whole of pleasing ; as the several pieces of a mosaic work, though, separately, of little beauty or value, when properly joined form those beautiful figures that please everybody. A look, a gesture, a tone of voice, all bear their parts in the great work of pleasing."

Very often the woman who gives least pleasure is the famous professional beauty who, because she has made a reputation, thinks that it is unnecessary to exert herself to please. As it conquests had not to be kept as well as won. Far more pleasure is given by a plainer woman who thinks less of herself and more of others, and who has cultivated that sympathy without which it is impossible to please. She makes a nearer approach to a

realization of the Duc de Morny's definition of a polite person. "A polite man," said he, "is one who listens with interest to things he knows all about when they are told by a person who knows nothing about them."

Why are thoughtless ladies the very opposite of their mirrors? Because the one speaks without reflecting, the other reflects without speaking. The only cure for the habit of speaking without reflecting, which is anything but a pleasing one, is to cultivate the mind. There is so immediate a relation between our thoughts and gestures, that woman must think well to look well.

A philosopher who had married an ignorant girl used to call her "brown sugar," because, he said, she was sweet but unrefined. We know that sugar may be refined as well as sweet, and, in the same way, wise cultivation of the mind need not lessen, but, on the contrary, may greatly increase a woman's talent of pleasing.

Our conclusion is that a woman's smile is powerful in proportion to the care with which she cultivates those mental and moral qualities which give—

"An inborn grace that nothing lacks
Of culture or appliance,
The warmth of genial courtesy,
The calm of self-reliance."



CHAPTER III.

HOW TO BE A LADY.

"It is now long since the women of England arrogated, universally, a title which once belonged to nobility only ; and, having once been in the habit of accepting the simple title of gentlewoman, as correspondent to that of gentleman, insisted on the privilege of assuming the title of 'Lady,' which properly corresponds only to the title of 'Lord.' I do not blame them for this ; but only for their narrow motive in this. I would have them desire and claim the title of Lady, provided they claim, not merely the title, but the office and duty signified by it."—*Ruskin.*



THE word "Lady," which is derived from the Saxon words *hlæf*, "a loaf," and *digan*, "to serve," means literally one who serves or dispenses bread to the family ; as "Lord" means the supplier of bread. The two words reflect an arrangement of the Almighty which cannot be ignored by even the most "advanced" confounder of the respective duties of the sexes. The natural healthy state of things is for the husband to supply the bread and other kinds of food, and for the

wife to serve them out to the family in the most healthful and economical way possible. If that man is to be regarded as a benefactor of his species who makes two stalks of corn to grow where only one grew before, not less is she to be regarded as a public benefactor who economizes and turns to the best practical account the food-products of human skill and labour.

He was practical, and had been making love on that basis.

She was a little that way herself.

"Can you cook?" he inquired.

"Can you supply everything to be cooked?" she replied.

It was a match.

Sentiment has long thrown a sort of halo around the work of a nurse as being peculiarly noble. The artist's life is considered eminently refining; other careers lead to the acquisition of money or fame; while all too frequently the housekeeper receives scanty praise for her efforts.

Piozzi, in "Anecdotes of Dr. Johnson," says, "I asked him if he ever huffed his wife about his dinner. 'So often,' replied he, 'that at last she said, "Nay, hold, Mr. Johnson, and do not make a farce of thanking God for a dinner which in a few minutes you will protest to be not eatable."' Husbands are too slow in perceiving the value and the difficulty of the work of their *loaf-servers*, and they sometimes forget that a little help is worth a great deal of fault-finding. "My master is all very well," said the dog; "but I wish he had a tail to wag when he is pleased."

It is true that some loaf-servers do not deserve much approval. Quite pathetic was the appeal for sympathy which an unfortunate Benedict made lately to the public in a newspaper

letter. Some years ago, he said, he had married a paragon of intellectual excellence. The lady had "done wonders in high education," and considered herself equal to any "in high art." But she had not condescended to make herself acquainted with such matters as the prices of provisions and the ordering of a household. As for paying a visit to the kitchen, she would as soon think of ordering the meat from that unæsthetic emporium, the butcher's shop. The result of all this, wailed the wretched husband, was, that "so far as comfort goes, I might just as well have been sold for a canal boat horse ; for while I am congratulated on the gem I possess, I am made sensible of the burden it involves."

Viscountess Strangford remarked in the *Queen* that art needlework now occupies the time of those who ought to be providing home comforts, and that "the tired breadwinner comes back to eat a poor dinner cooked by an ignorant slavey, while his daughter finishes her German exercise. It is an ever-sounding cry, 'There are no cooks !' The girl who teaches herself intelligent cookery is able to bring comfort and health—nay, even some degree of luxury—into households of very limited means. Yet how few learn to cook ! In the colonies cooks are at a premium everywhere, wages sometimes rising to really absurd sums ; yet cooks are hard to find. Nor need we leave our own country to realize the dearth of cooks. The writer of these lines advertised a few days ago in order to find a situation for a respectable woman who had been a good plain cook before an unhappy marriage plunged her into trouble. By noon of the day on which the advertisement appeared, seven gentlemen and ladies had called at the house mentioned in hopes of see-

ing the cook, and before the end of the two following days she had received five hundred and thirty-three letters from ladies earnestly desiring to engage her! What does it mean? Why are there not more cooks in England?"

The proverb says that God sends meat and the devil sends cooks. The second part of this saying is true only in the sense that women too often fail to cultivate the talent for preparing and making the most of human food that God has given to them.

A schoolgirl says her studies are arithmetic, algebra, geography, astronomy, grammar, English history, general history, etymology, spelling, composition, drawing, reading, writing, and singing by note. Commenting on this, a writer says ironically: "It looks as if her education were being sadly neglected. Unless French, Latin, mental philosophy, civil engineering, and hydrostatics are added to her studies she will be totally unfit to assume the duties of a wife and mother a few years hence."

Seriously, ought not cookery to be taught much more extensively than is now the case in English schools? Those, however, who cannot have the benefit of a course of lessons may, by practice and the assistance of a simple cookery book, teach themselves. It would be well if young ladies would undertake the preparation of a portion of the daily food in their homes in the most tasteful and economical way. This would make servants respect the art of cookery and give up the scorn which they now feel for economy. To feed people in dainty ways only requires the exercise of the same powers that are called for in arranging a dress or beautifying a room, or doing several other kinds of work which are generally considered, but which

really are not more sublime and beautiful. Call cookery a department of chemistry, and cook herself a scientific chemist, and you can see at once the dignity of her work. Indeed, it would seem that the only reason why good cooks do not occupy the social esteem now enjoyed by medical men is the universal forgetfulness of the fact that "prevention is better than cure." Trained cooks prevent ill-health, while physicians, though they drive in carriages, and appear much grander, only cure it. Nor is it only the physical nature that is benefited by good cookery. Its effect upon the temper and moral nature generally of a husband and children is very great indeed. Very bad consequences come from neglecting the old advice of "Feed the brute!" given in regard to a husband. "The longer I live," says Sidney Smith, "the more I am convinced that the apothecary is of more importance than Seneca; and that half the unhappiness in the world proceeds from little stoppages, from a duct choked up, from food pressing in the wrong place, from a vext duodenum, or an agitated pylorus." If "the cook" were substituted for "the apothecary," this sentiment would be quite as true.

In answer to the question, What does cookery mean? Mr. Ruskin says: "It means the knowledge of all herbs, and fruits, and balms, and spices, and of all that is healing and sweet in fields and groves, and savoury in meats; it means carefulness, and inventiveness, and watchfulness, and willingness, and readiness of appliance; it means the economy of your great-grandmothers, and the science of modern chemists; it means much tasting, and no wasting; it means English thoroughness, and French art, and Arabian hospitality; and

it means, in fine, that you are to be perfectly and always 'ladies'—'loaf-givers'; and, as you are to see imperatively, that everybody has something pretty to put on—so you are to see, yet more imperatively, that everybody has something nice to eat." Though men are the bread-winners of households, the "cares of bread" do not fall upon them at all more heavily than they do upon women, for it is quite as difficult to lay out to the best advantage the family income as to make it. "A fool may make money, but it needs a wise man or woman to spend it." A good wife has learned what to buy and the proper value of household necessities. She knows the most economical cuts of beef and mutton, and how to use fragments to advantage. She can feed her family on an income that a less talented wife would consider starvation. She may be highly educated, but she is not too bright or good for the preparation of human nature's daily food.

When one sees the waste and discomfort that exist in some households in reference to that first necessity—food—one wonders how the mistresses of these homes ever dared to marry. It is true that fools enter where angels fear to tread; but it is something worse than folly to enter the difficult state of matrimony so badly prepared for its duties. We believe that the intending mistress of a house ought to make herself thoroughly acquainted with the subject of bread-serving in all its branches. She should endeavour to understand not merely how to cook the several kinds of food, but when they are in season, and the proper price of each. She should learn what part food plays in the economy of the body, the relationship which solid foods bear to liquid, and what the particular kinds

of foods are which should be given to the sick and to the young during the periods of active growth. If women would acquire and use this knowledge in reference to children, Dr. Richardson prophesies that "at the end of one or two generations there would hardly be a deformed child, and rickets, bowed legs, crooked spines, and humpbacks would have passed away as if by the spell of an enchantress."

The good old word "lady" is now so "soiled with all ignoble use" that it is more respectable to be called "woman" than "lady." And yet, as we have seen, "lady" is an honourable word, and one that teaches a useful lesson. Looking back on its original meaning, it seems quite wonderful how girls and women could ever have thought it unladylike to go into the kitchen and busy themselves with serving bread and other kinds of food to their families. What is really unladylike is to be ignorant of household matters. Certainly if any mistress of a moderate income is ashamed of cooking or of knowing all about it, her husband will probably have cause to be ashamed both of her and of himself before many years shall have passed away. On cooking health depends, and on health temper and efficiency, and on efficiency success. A year's ill-cooked dinners may make all the difference between a man's ultimately becoming a Prime Minister or a clerk in the War Department. It is said that Emerson's somewhat premature breakdown was due to his too abundant and indiscriminate consumption of every variety of cookery. If wives want cheerful and prosperous husbands, and healthy and successful children, let them above all things see to the management of the table.

From a book by Lady Bellairs we take the following illustration of truly ladylike conduct in the proper literal sense of the word: "A lady I knew of—highly accomplished in many ways, the wife of a field-officer—used to give the most agreeable and *recherché* dinners in the garrison town in which her husband's regiment was stationed. No stranger witnessing this fair lady in elegant attire, carrying on an animated conversation on either side of her, would have supposed that the well-dressed viands and prepared delicacies placed on the table had all been cooked by her hands. Yet so it was. Possessed of small means, and able to keep only one little maid, besides her husband's soldier-servant who waited at table, she was her own cook upon these occasions. Everything in the kitchen being in a forward state of preparation for dishing up, she would seize a suitable interval, when not so much required, to dress. Then donning over her velvet gown what she termed her "cooking blouse," she would again descend to make final arrangements, and instruct the little maid in sending in the various dishes. As the dinner-hour struck, off would go the blouse, and with a peep into the dining-room to see all was right there, she would be seated in the drawing-room in time to receive her guests—sometimes a dozen in number!"

If the removal of temptation is one of the first duties of the practical moralist, very guilty are those wives who place before their husbands such an inducement to profanity and general evil-mindedness as a badly cooked dinner.

"SCENE—BUTCHER SHOP.

"*Young Married Lady*: 'What have you to-day?'

"*Butcher* : 'Not much to-day, mum—a hind quarter of veal and liver.'

"*Young Married Lady* (after a moment's deliberation) :
Well, I will take a hind quarter of liver.'"

This sort of person is as far removed from a "lady" in the literal sense of that word as she is from being a good wife. *Noblesse oblige*, and if a girl or woman considers herself a lady or bread-server, almost the first accomplishment she is bound to acquire is a theoretical and practical knowledge of the supply and preparation of food. It is a Christian duty, and one that especially belongs to women, to obey that command of their Saviour which He spoke concerning bread—"Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost."

In a beautiful sermon, called "The Best Dish" ("The Bird's Nest and other Sermons for Children") the Rev. Dr. Cox compares the characters of Martha and Mary, and then addresses some wise counsels to girls. We conclude with a few of his words : "We cannot well doubt, indeed, that even the Lord Jesus, little as He cared for what we call 'the good things of this life,' approved of thrift, industry, skill, good sense and good taste ; or that, though He was content with simple fare, He preferred to have it properly cooked and delicately served. We cannot doubt that He who, because He would suffer no waste, commanded the apostles to gather up the fragments of the loaves and fishes with which He had fed the Five Thousand, approves of you when you prevent waste, by making the most and best of the gifts of His Father's bounty. You can never please Him by wasting or spoiling good food, or by suffering it to be wasted and spoiled. You cannot fail to please Him when

you do the best you can with it, and serve it, or have it served, with a grace and a refinement which turns the simplest of meals into a feast. You may be quite sure that if Martha, when she had done her best in the kitchen and at the table, instead of pressing new dainties upon the Master, or fussing about her dishes and flasks, had felt that there were higher things than eating and drinking, things for which He cared infinitely more ; if she had sought to enter into His thoughts, and sympathize with His aims, and learn some new lesson or take some new gift of Him, He would have been just as pleased with her as He was with Mary. Why even we ourselves are distressed if, when a friend asks us to her house, she lets us see that she is thinking of nothing but the dinner.

“None of you girls, I hope, will ever think yourselves too fine, or too cultivated, to attend to your domestic duties, or even, if need be, to turn up your sleeves and pin on an apron, and toss off some dainty little dish which may stimulate the appetite of the weary or the sick ; for even in such humble services as these you may be pleasing and serving the Lord as truly and devoutly as in any act of public worship. But I also hope that you will not forget there are still higher duties than these ; that in ministering to the spirit you do more and better than in ministering to the body. For if there is one creature more pitiable than the fine lady who cannot condescend to the cares of the table or the house, it is the woman who degrades herself into a mere kitchen drudge, and whose soul seems never to get out of the pepper-box and salt-cellar.”



CHAPTER IV.

HOUSE-WIFE OR HOUSE-MOTH?

"Man for the field and woman for the hearth,
Man for the sword and for the needle she."—*Tennyson.*

"The subject of needlework is one full of interest and importance."
—*H. R. H. Princess Christian.*

"Come, wife,' said Will, 'I pray you devote
Just half a minute to mend this coat,
Which a nail has chanced to rend.'
'Tis ten o'clock,' said the drowsy mate.
'I know,' said Will, 'it is rather late,
But 'it's never too late to mend!'"

—*Cassell's Saturday Journal.*

IN his lectures * to little housewives the lecturer asks Dora, one of his pupils, if she knows what the beautiful word "wife" comes from?

Dora (tossing her head): "I don't think it is a particularly beautiful word."

Lecturer: "Perhaps not. At your ages you may think

* "Ethics of the Dust, or Lectures to Little Housewives," by John Ruskin.

'bride' sounds better ; but wife's the word for wear, depend upon it. It is the great word in which the English and Latin languages conquer the French and the Greek. I hope the French will some day get a word for it, yet, instead of their dreadful 'femme.' But what do you think it comes from ?"

Dora : "I never *did* think about it."

Lecturer : "Nor you, Sibyl ?"

Sibyl : "No ; I thought it was Saxon, and stopped there."

Lecturer : "Yes ; but the great good of Saxon words is, that they usually do mean something. 'Wife' means 'weaver.' You have all the right to call yourselves little 'housewives,' when you sew neatly."

Dora : "But I don't think we want to call ourselves 'little housewives.'"

Lecturer : "You must either be house-Wives or house-Moths ; remember that. In the deep sense, you must either weave men's fortunes, and embroider them ; or feed upon, and bring them to decay."

Before our great cotton and cloth factories arose, one of the principal employments in every house was the fabrication of clothing : every family made its own. The wool was spun into thread by the girls, who were therefore called spinsters ; the thread was woven into cloth by their mother, who, accordingly, was called the weaver, or the wife ; and another remnant of this old truth we discover in the word heirloom, applied to any old piece of furniture which has come down to us from our ancestors, and which, though it may be a chair or bed, shows that a loom was once a most important article in every house. Thus the word "wife" means "weaver" ; and as

Archbishop Trench well remarks: "In the word itself is wrapped up a hint of earnest, in-door, stay-at-home occupations, as being fitted for her who bears this name."

From the *Boston Courier* we take the following :—

"A Chinaman is speaking to himself as he irons a shirt. Picks up a shirt showing evidence of having been well cared for and says: 'Bachelor. Him landlady fix him.' Picks up another, buttonless and all frayed at the wrists and neck: 'Mallied man.'"

The woman who allows her husband's shirt to be "buttonless and all frayed at the wrists and neck" may have been married according to law, but if we are to use words in their proper literal sense she ought not to be called a "wife." Sidney Smith said that a woman's settlement in life might turn upon the colour of a bow or the shape of a bonnet. He might have added that her usefulness and happiness as a wife greatly depend upon her ability to mend, make, and buy clothes in the most tasteful and economical way for herself and her family.

No doubt it is a mistake to think, as missionaries tell us heathen people do, that Christianity consists in wearing clothes; nevertheless to a considerable extent Christian morality is improved or injured by the discipline of dress, and, as Mr. Ruskin says, "there are many reasons for thinking that we do not at present attach enough importance to beautiful dress, as one of the means of influencing taste and character."

It is a sad reflection that as soon as the question of dress entered Paradise happiness went out. If man had been dressed as the cattle and fowls are dressed, no doubt many of them would have been dressed in better taste; and many

anxieties, and much vanity and weariness and misery would have been prevented. On the other hand, a beneficial discipline would have been missed. In learning to clothe ourselves healthily and becomingly, in learning to think soberly and rationally about clothing, to give it the proper amount of thought and no more—in this way we may get a good deal of valuable education.

Mrs. Henry Ward Beecher thus writes :—

“ We well remember being escorted to the refreshment-room at a party by a stately, dignified gentleman, and as we drew near the door found it blockaded by part of the company returning from the table as others were proceeding to it. So many trains going in different directions could hardly fail, however skilfully managed, to become entangled, and in the hasty efforts to separate the out-going and in-coming trains, our escort was caught by one of heavy velvet and nearly thrown down. Though still preserving his gentlemanly bearing, he could not refrain from a half-muttered ejaculation ; then turning to us with a smile, quietly said : ‘ A little more material at the top of the lady’s dress and less at the bottom would be very convenient.’ ”

So it is that modesty and common sense may be cultivated or killed by what we do about our raiment.

Arabella : “ Here he is, just where he’s been for six weeks ; why doesn’t he speak out ? I’m sure I encourage him enough.”

George : “ Here she is, as usual, wearing a costume which cost more than I can make in six weeks. How can I ask her to marry me, as it would be impossible for me to support her in the extravagant style in which she now lives ? ”

Two people made for life lonely, and perhaps not as good and useful as they might have been because one of them was dishonest in the matter of dress! We say dishonest, because people are that when they incur expenses they cannot afford.

One of the Fathers of the Church defined woman as "a clothes-wearing animal—a clothes-loving creature." When we see how a man regards money and deals with it we see much of his character, and in the same way when we have found out how a girl or woman feels and acts about clothes we have got a key to her nature and history. "I bless Eve for eating that apple," said a young lady the other day, as she stood before the mirror. "Why?" asked a companion. "Because there is such a delight in trying on a new dress when it fits well." This young lady belonged to that class of women to whom clothes are the object of life. The first question this sort of woman asks about any public event is, "What did the ladies wear?" and in any crisis in her own life her greatest anxiety is, "What shall I put on?" She seems to be of opinion that it is the clothes that make the woman, and not the woman the clothes. She says, what is quite true, that she owes it to society to look nice, and perhaps quotes approvingly from Browning—

"Be thy beauty
Thy sole duty," &c.

Disgusted at the vanity of this class of women, and disapproving of the large amount of time and money they expend upon their covering, others go to an opposite extreme. They regret that they have not been clothed like the animals, and say that if they must wear something a single sack is quite

sufficient for their modest requirements. “‘My mind to me a kingdom is,’ and does it matter wherewithal the wretched body is clothed? I shall not devote my life to the fashion of dresses or even to the fit of gloves.”

To both classes of women we commend the sensible rule which the wife of a President of the United States made for her guidance. She said that a woman should give careful attention to her clothes in her dressing-room and entirely forget them out of it.

We are well dressed when our clothes are suitable to the climate, to our age, to our position in life, to our work or amusements. It is not a question of money, but of taste and the fitness of things. One woman may be badly dressed in velvet and satin, and another well dressed in print and serge. That daughter of a *parvenu* millionaire of the Western States was badly because unsuitably dressed who, when she went to a sensible New England seminary, where the young ladies were expected to wait on themselves, descended to the scullery in a velvet robe and diamond earrings! The tight-laced, be-flounced, be-trained, damsel proclaims to the world her utter unwomanliness. The nursery would soon make havoc of her finery. Let us hope she would never carry it into a sick-room, and in the kitchen it would be a nuisance and a bad example.

Having alluded to tight-lacing, we may mention in passing that a doctor has at last been found to say a good word even for that practice. He thinks that tight-lacing is a public benefit, because it kills off the foolish girls and leaves the wise ones to grow into women. The women amongst the ancient Greeks, who were, perhaps, the most beautiful race of the

world, and whose glorious statues people pretend nowadays to admire, never wore stays. The use of them was, I believe, first mentioned only about 400 years after the birth of Christ, when some Grecian women were said to have laughed at a poor slave who squeezed in her waist.

The dress of these Grecian women hung from the shoulders, was in one piece, and showed the natural grace and form of the body without the aid of art. No Greek lady ever wore that dreadful, that wicked thing, called a dress-improver.

The wife or clothier of the family should be aware that after suitability the next most important element of beautiful dress is simplicity. John Newton, giving advice to a lady, said, "Madam, so dress and so conduct yourself that persons who have been in your company shall not recollect what you had on." There is a pretty fable, *The Angel and the Rosebud*, which we commend to those who have not learned to appreciate the beauty of simplicity:—

"The angel who takes care of the flowers, and sprinkles upon them dew in the still night, slumbered on a spring day in the shade of a rose-bush. When he awoke, he said, 'Most beautiful of my children, I thank thee for thy refreshing odour and cooling shade. Could you now ask any favour, how willingly would I grant it!' 'Adorn me, then, with a new charm,' said the spirit of the rosebud in a beseeching tone. So the angel adorned the loveliest of flowers with simple moss. Sweetly it stood there in its modest attire, the moss-rose, the most beautiful of its kind. So the costliest ornaments are often the simplest."

It is the wearer who makes the success of a dress, and a

great secret of the Parisian dressmakers' art is that they adapt their fashions to the individual customer, and happily, if the wearer be a Frenchwoman, they meet with hearty co-operation. There are few who do not understand what suits them. They make a study of face, figure, and carriage, and though their garments are costly, they do not have too many of them. They make each new dress a part of themselves, and realize its effect in motion and in repose. They raise the "toilette" to the dignity of a fine art, and, moreover, succeed in producing a perfect result. The colours worn are often daring in their combination, but they are so skilfully handled that they never produce a discordant effect.

We are much pleased to learn that the different associations that are now being formed for teaching ladies the art of dress-making are tolerably successful. Music and painting are accomplishments, but dressing is a necessity, and all women should show their appreciation of art by making and putting on their dresses artistically. No one who has an eye for beauty of form can avoid seeing the difference between an artistically dressed person, however simple the toilette, and one who is ill-dressed. The human shape is beautiful by nature, and ought not to be disfigured by its covering.

It has been well said that "to throw a pot of paint at a canvas does not make a picture." So it is not making a gown to throw a quantity of material together in any slipshod fashion. The value of a gown consists rather in artistic make than in costly material; a velvet gown ill-made is a bad gown; a serge at 1s. 6d. a yard skilfully made is a gown that might be worn by the highest lady. A girl should desire to do her best on

the simplest thing. It may be said of dressmaking, as of other work, that true greatness consists not so much in doing extraordinary things as in doing ordinary things extraordinarily well.

"One of the neatest dresses I ever saw," says Lady John Manners, "was worn by an American lady; it was of dark blue stuff, manufactured in Wales. It was made by her maid; it cost 6s. 6d., and was the envy of all her female friends, and the admiration of most men who saw it." Elaborate trimmings should be sparingly used, especially by the young. Youth is its own best ornament. The handsome are allowed by Lord Lytton to be showy in dress; "the plain should study to be unexceptionable—just as in great men we look for something to admire; in ordinary men we ask for nothing to forgive."

The same writer says: "Never in your dress altogether desert that taste which is general. The world considers eccentricity in great things, genius; in small things, folly." Extremes are as much to be avoided in dress as in anything else, but it is quite possible to follow the taste and style of the day at a little distance, so as not to look particularly behind the times, and yet to wear garments that are not, as the phrase goes, the very newest thing out. It is impossible for an ordinary girl to keep pace with the fashions, and foolish to make the attempt. "Why in such a hurry?" said a man to an acquaintance. "Sir," he replied, "I have bought a new bonnet for my wife, and fear the fashion may change before I get home." How costly is fashion! Tight-lacing, heavy flouncing, high heels, and so forth, are costly of health; birds' wings are costly of suffering; complicated trimmings are costly of time and human

energy in a world where there is so much work that requires to be done. Says a writer in the *Girl's Own Paper*.—

“It seems to us that when a lady has once discovered the dress best suited to her age, appearance, and condition—the ideal robe in which she would wish to be painted for the eyes of unborn generations—her future study will be, not how much she can ‘follow the fashion,’ but how little she need follow it to escape singularity.”

In saying this much about the art of dressing well we have not strayed away from the title at the head of this chapter ; for although a wife is seldom or never a “weaver” now, her head and hands are still much employed in planning, mending, and making clothes for herself and her family. A wife’s needle, how busy it is, making and mending—a button on here and a tape on there !

In a London omnibus recently some men were talking about the nerve of William Tell in shooting an apple off his son’s head. To vex a lady who was listening, and who was a well-known upholder of “woman’s rights,” one of the men said—

“That was Mr. Tell. But what did his wife amount to ? Why don’t history mention his wife ?”

“I’ll undertake to say,” cried the lady, in an excited voice—
“I’ll undertake to say that she sat up half the night before patching that boy’s clothes so that he might look decent to go out !”

Perhaps we ought rather to have said a wife’s needle how busy it used to be, for sewing even with a machine is not as much practised as once it was. This is a pity, for an hour’s sewing soothes a woman’s nerves. She sews all her little

irritations into the seams, imprisons her fancied wrongs into the double gussets, or slays them in the gores. Mrs. Somerville, the great mathematician, wrote in tribute to the soothing powers of a long seam. Madame Dudevant (George Sand), who was of a very different calibre, contributed a similar testimony. Every sensible woman confirms it. We believe in the higher education of women, but we think that before studying Greek, Latin, and the 'ologies, a girl should learn to be her own dressmaker.

Homes would be much happier if there were fewer silks and velvet street costumes, and more plain, tidy, house dresses. It is certainly a wife's duty to be as careful to add to her charms by dressing prettily in order to please her husband as she was when that individual was only her lover. We ought not to think that it matters little how we dress at home. It matters much to our own self-respect and the respect of our friends. Such things as cuffs and collars should be immaculate. No real lady will be seen even in the bosom of her family with a soiled collar or a ragged piece of braid so long as soap, water, starch, and needles and thread are within her reach.

We cannot better conclude this chapter than by quoting what Mr. Ruskin says on the subject of dress in his "Letter to Young Girls":—

"Dress as plainly as your parents will allow you; but in bright colours (if they become you), and in the best materials—that is to say, in those which will wear longest. When you are really in want of a new dress, buy it (or make it) in the fashion; but never quit an old one merely because it has become unfashionable. And if the fashion be costly, you

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must not follow it. You may wear broad stripes or narrow, bright colours or dark, short petticoats or long (in moderation) as the public wish you ; but you must not buy yards of useless stuff to make a knot or a flounce of ; nor drag them behind you over the ground. And your walking dress must never touch the ground at all. I have lost much of the faith I once had in the common sense and even in the personal delicacy of the present race of average Englishwomen, by seeing how they will allow their dresses to sweep the streets, if it is the fashion to be scavengers. If you can afford it, get your dresses made by a good dressmaker, with utmost attainable precision and perfection. And be sure of this, that although in a truly Christian land every young girl would be dressed beautifully and delightfully,—in this entirely heathen and Baal-worshipping land of ours not one girl in ten has either decent or healthy clothing : and that you have no business, till this be amended, to wear anything fine yourself, but *are bound to use your full strength and resources* to dress as many of your poor neighbours as you can. What of fine dress your people insist upon your wearing, take—and wear proudly and prettily for their sakes ; but, so far as in you lies, be sure that every day you are labouring to clothe some poorer creatures. Devote a part of every day to thorough needlework, in making as pretty dresses as you can for poor people, who have not time nor taste to make them nicely for themselves. You are to show them in your own wearing what is modestly right and graceful ; and to help them to choose what will be prettiest and most becoming in their own station. If they see that you never try to dress above yours, they will not try to dress above theirs.”

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CHAPTER V.

A CENTRE OF ORDER.

"Let thy mind's sweetness have his operation upon body, clothes, and habitation."—*George Herbert.*

"Order is the sanity of the mind, the health of the body, the peace of the city, the security of the State."—*Southey.*



IF woman is "a balm of distress" she should also be the centre of order. It is impossible to overestimate the importance of orderly habits, not merely to herself, but to her relations and friends. When early acquired, they become a kind of instinct, discomfort and disorder disappearing before them as if by magic. For the orderly arrangement of a household by no means depends upon the amount of money that is spent in it, but rather on the orderly habits of its mistress. Of course, clever servants can do a great deal; but even they become demoralized in time, when the mistress and the young ladies of the house are not orderly.

It is the details of comfort supplied by the women who take care of it that make a home. The family sense of well-being does not consist in the romantic surroundings, or architectural beauty, or artistic furnishing of a house, so much as in the cleanliness, the neatness, the punctuality—in a word, the order of its interior economy. These are the outward and visible signs of the character of a good housekeeper.

“How can I tell her?
By her cellar,
Cleanly shelves and whitened wall,
I can guess her
By her dresser,
By the back staircase and hall,
And with pleasure
Take her measure
By the way she keeps her brooms;
Or the peeping
At the ‘keeping’
Of her back and *unseen* rooms.
By her kitchen’s air of neatness
And its general completeness,
Wherein in cleanliness and sweetness
The rose of order blooms.”

Order is—if not as Pope declares, “Heaven’s first law”—certainly a prime element of earthly happiness; and in the house of a muddling woman there is no order that is worthy of the name. Let her income be what it may, disorder, and consequent discomfort, reign within her walls. But, indeed, there are few housekeepers who can afford “muddle,” for it means the maximum of expense with the minimum of comfort.

Without a thorough system, and well-thought-out order, no household is really comfortable, or characterized by that sense

of repose and fitness which is one of the greatest charms of daily life. It takes time to ascertain by experience what are the best laws to lay down in a household, when to relax them (for they must be relaxed sometimes), and when to remain firm and insist on their observance. Household duties should be done at stated times, and in addition to the ordinary duties, every day in the week should have some particular duty—certain rooms or certain articles that require special cleaning. A house cannot be comfortable where the servants lose an hour at the beginning of the day, and spend the rest of the day in futile attempts to make up the loss. But if servants are to be punctual, employers must set them the example. The system of continual uncertainty in which some families live—cups and saucers, plates and dishes to be found in the dining-room at all sorts of proper and improper hours—is a bad one, and betokens very surely future trouble.

If there is no regard for time, a “happy-go-lucky” administration, there is always more or less friction. Trains run at a particular hour, schools and offices begin at a certain time, so if the arrangements of a house are not punctual, its inmates will always be in a wearing, irritating hurry, and yet never in time. Napoleon’s cook always had a roast chicken ready for his master at any time he called for breakfast, because every quarter of an hour he put a fresh chicken down to roast. If we cannot afford so many chickens we must be punctual to the settled hours of meals. A woman of experience observes that a good way to pick out a husband is to see how patiently he waits for dinner when it is behind time. Her husband remarks that a good way to pick out a

wife is to see whether the woman has dinner ready in time. A man said, "I have a very reliable clock, for when it points at two, it always strikes twelve, and then I know it's half-past seven o'clock." I spent the other day in a house the mistress of which resembled that clock, and I never wish to enter it again. Every meal was at least half an hour late, the hostess spent much of her time in looking for keys, and only spoke to apologize for things that never would have gone wrong if she had been a centre of order rather than as she was, painfully chaotic.

We often speak of "business men," but are there not business women too in the world? Certainly; for the management of a household is as much a matter of business as the management of a shop or of a counting-house. It requires method, accuracy, organization, industry, economy, discipline, tact, knowledge, and capacity for adapting means to ends. All this is of the essence of business; and hence business habits ought to be cultivated by girls who aspire to succeed in life. Mr. Bright has said of boys, "Teach a boy arithmetic thoroughly, and he is a made man." Why? Because it teaches him method, accuracy, value, proportions, relations. But does not a girl require to learn arithmetic as much as does a boy? She does; for when she becomes a wife, if she is not up to her business—that is, the management of her domestic affairs in conformity with the simple principles of arithmetic—she will, through sheer ignorance, be liable to commit extravagances which may be most injurious to her family peace and comfort. Method, which is the soul of business, is also of great importance in the home. The unpunctual woman, like the un-

punctual man, occasions dislike, because she consumes and wastes time. To the business man time is money ; but to the business woman method is more : it is peace, comfort, and domestic prosperity.

The dying pauper in the old story was told by the Beadle that heaven was not for "the likes of *him*," and that he ought "to be very thankful to have another place to go to." If home is what women make it, not a few poor husbands have to reflect with sorrow that there is no heaven of domestic felicity for "the likes of them." The cause of many a man's ruin has been the muddle in his own house, the repulsiveness of his own fireside, so that he has been driven to find an appearance of cheerfulness in the inn and public-house. While he has been learning habits of dissipation that have culminated in the ruin of his body and estate, his wife, meanwhile, sitting at home "nursing her wrath to keep it warm," has become soured and chronically ill-tempered. A man must be a miracle of patience if, on returning from the fatigues of his daily labour, and finding a black fire, the sitting-room in a litter, his children squalling, and his wife vexed and annoyed at her incapacity to correct the muddle, he is not also touched with the like infirmity, and becomes fretful and impatient.

A clean, fresh, and well-ordered house exercises over its inmates a moral no less than a physical influence, and has a direct tendency to make the members of the family sober, peaceable, and considerate of the feelings and happiness of each other.

In a cemetery a little white stone marked the grave of a

loved little girl, and on the stone were chiselled these words : " A child of whom her playmates said, ' It was easier to be good when she was with us.' " A similar epitaph might be placed over the grave of every woman who, when alive, was a centre of order.

Even if a girl never is destined to marry and manage a home of her own, habits of order are no less necessary. She probably has not much money, and finds it difficult to get new clothes. Care and tidiness make old garments look better than the new ones of rich girls who take no care of them. A gown that is brushed and folded, or a bonnet that is constantly put away safe from dust as soon as done with, will look well three or four times as long as one that is thrown aside anywhere when taken off. Do not, then, even in reference to your own personal belongings, despise that good old rule : " Have a place for everything, and always put everything in its place."

When choosing a wife a man should, without letting her know that she was being tested, ask the girl he is thinking of to find something belonging to her in the dark. If she is, as she ought to be, a centre of order, she will easily be able to do so. A patriarch said to his son, " Select a wife, my son, who will never step over a broomstick." The son carefully treasured up the lesson. " Now," pleasantly said he one day to one of his companions, " I appoint that broomstick to choose me a wife. The young lady who will not step over it shall have the offer of my hand." The ladies passed by the broomstick, some stumbling over, and others jumping over it. At length a young lady stooped and *put it in its place*. The

promise was fulfilled : she became the wife of an educated and wealthy young man, and he the husband of a prudent, industrious, and lovely wife.

Speaking of girls' work, Rev. H. R. Haweis says, "Order, neatness, cleanliness must first be learnt. God's world is *in order*. Some habits must be learnt young. If you are not orderly at eighteen, the chances are, you never will be. A slovenly girl will make a slatternly wife. Go home, and look at your cupboards. How many things can you find without a hunt ? Peep into those corners—drawers—nondescript places, where everything for which there is no other place gets stowed away. Do you notice grease spots quickly ? Do you take them out or merely fold them over ? A lady said to me, 'What can be worse than a glove that has been mended ?' 'A glove that wants mending,' I replied. These may seem to be small things, but the common neglect of them shows that there are too many girls like a certain lazy, fashionable young lady who the other day was heard giving the following piece of sententious advice : "Never put off till to-morrow what you can get your mother to do to-day."

Women complain that it is more difficult for them to get work than it is for men. Are they as much to be relied upon ? The editor of a provincial paper was talking to me the other day about the large number of MS. stories sent to compete for prizes which he had to read. Knowing that he had two clever daughters, I suggested that they might help him. "Yes," he said, "they might, and they have at different times undertaken to do so ; but they never will do what I ask them, just as I want it done, and at the right time. My daughters

vex me with their unpunctual, unmethodical ways of working, so I prefer to do everything myself." Until women acquire, and put into practice, habits of order, they cannot expect their work to be appreciated, and well paid for.

Not long ago I was crossing in the steam-launch that plys between Portsea and Gosport. Two of the female passengers were dirty, ragged, and dissipated-looking, evidently professional beggars. Very different was the appearance of another woman. Judging from her threadbare garments, she was as poor or poorer than the professional beggars. Her face was pinched with sickness or deficiency of food; but the boy she held by the hand was well fed, and had to amuse him a headless horse. The poor woman did not beg, but I heard her quietly remarking that as there was no work about Portsmouth she was going to walk to Chichester in search for it. "You are," I said to myself, "a centre of order, though your battle of life is evidently a hard one." This could be inferred from the fact that her hands and face, and those of her child, were well washed, and that their clothes, which were mended in several places with the greatest neatness, had not on them a spot of dirt that could have been removed. The poor woman wore a coarse but perfectly clean apron, indicating that she was on the look-out for charring work. The only change I had about me was a shilling, but I could not help slipping it into her hand, and saying, "This is for the clean apron, if you will allow a stranger to admire your praiseworthy attempt to be neat and orderly."

This woman made a shilling by her clean apron, and another whom I know lost a sovereign by a soiled collar. She is a

widow with several children. When her husband, who was much respected, died, a subscription was got up for his family. A friend of mine went to see the widow, with two sovereigns in his pocket, which he meant to give to her. He found the house, the children, and everything in a state of disorder and muddle, and the woman herself wearing a collar so soiled that he made up his mind that any one who could wear such a collar would never put money or anything else to good account, and gave her only one sovereign instead of two. But we all see daily and hourly illustrations of the fact that when a woman is not as she ought to be, a centre of order, things get into a state of confusion worse confounded.

I know a house the mistress of which is always complaining of the degeneracy of servants, as an apology for the untidy state of everything, which she cannot but feel is noticed by her visitors. And yet this lady has three grown-up daughters, who are "so delicate, poor dears, that they never can give any help." As their delicacy is of the "nervous" kind, it would surely be much better for their health, and would add considerably to the comfort of their home, if the two inefficient servants of the establishment were dismissed, and these ladies were to become themselves centres of domestic order. The other day a mother consulted a celebrated London physician about her daughters, and received the following honest advice. "The old-fashioned way of working, rather with our own hands than by proxy, is the best of tonics ; get your daughters to put on brown holland aprons and help in the house two or three hours a day." "But that is not the fashion," replied the mother. "No fault of mine," said the doctor; "your daughters cannot

cheat nature ; man is a machine made for motion, not for idleness ; what they disdain with their hands will fall upon their nerves ; if they refuse nature's tonic they must take mine—a very poor substitute, I assure you.”

The girl who proudly sweeps into a neighbour's drawing-room very rarely sweeps the drawing-room at home. She lets her mother do that. We know several much troubled mothers who are afflicted with daughters of this description. Their whole time is spent in paying gossiping visits, and the last thing they think of doing is to become centres of order at home.

To be quite candid, we must admit that there is such a thing as the pedantry of order. Piozzi once asked Dr. Johnson if he ever disputed with his wife. “Perpetually,” said he ; “my wife had a particular reverence for cleanliness, and desired the praise of neatness in her dress and furniture, as many ladies do till they become troublesome to their best friends, slaves to their own besoms, and only sigh for the hour of sweeping their husbands out of the house as dirt and useless lumber.” We think that more husbands are kept out of their homes by reason of deficiency of neatness rather than by excess, but we should be sorry if any words of ours were to induce wives to sweep out of the house their matrimonial lumber.



CHAPTER VI.

WOMAN'S WORK—TO TEACH.

"All women may be raised to the dignity of spiritual mothers and educators of the human race."—*From the German.*

"If we set a proper value on those who contribute to the prosperity of the State, we ought to place in the first rank those who teach children, whose labours influence posterity, and on whose precepts and exertions the welfare of our country in a great measure depends."—*Lorenzo de' Medici.*



DISTINGUISHED professor recently asked the daughter of a wealthy brewer who employs a little army of workmen if she ever did anything for the improvement of her father's "hands." She replied, thoughtfully, "that she did not; but that she used to rub her own with a preparation of glycerine and oatmeal every night before retiring to rest." This sort of woman neglects a duty when she does not try to teach and improve those who come within reach of her influence, for teaching is pre-eminently woman's work. It re-

quires sympathy, tact, and patience ; qualities which are, as a rule, possessed by women more than by men.

A lady who has herself worked hard in teaching and civilizing the boys and men of a large village, thus speaks to her sister women of the opportunity they have for directing aright the lives of boys : " If you will have a class for them, you can do what no man can do. You can make your womanhood a sort of external conscience to them. You can appeal to them never to say or do things which they know you would disapprove of. You can urge them by their love and respect for you to respect others for your sake."

Each lady reader should here ask herself whether she has ever devoted a part of her time to the work of teaching ignorant boys to read and ignorant girls to sew. They are not always attractive, or winsome, or well behaved, and sometimes they are dirty, ragged, and repulsive in appearance ; but they are your peculiar charge, because you are or may be fitted, if not by nature, then by grace to teach them. District visiting, Sunday-school teaching, teaching in night schools—these are some of the common ways in which ladies who have not to earn their bread by teaching can employ their talents.

In his " Letter to Young Girls," Mr. Ruskin gives the following wise and pious advice : " You must be resolved that as all you have shall be God's, so all you *are* shall be God's ; and you are to make it so, simply and quietly, by thinking always of yourself merely as sent to do His work ; and considering at every leisure time what you are to do next. Don't fret nor tease yourself about it, far less other people. Don't wear white crosses, nor black dresses, nor

caps with lappets. Nobody has any right to go about in an offensively celestial uniform, as if it were more *their* business, or privilege, than it is everybody's, to be God's servants. But know and feel assuredly that every day of your lives you have done all you can for the good of others. Done, I repeat—not said. Help your companions, but don't talk religious sentiment to them; and serve the poor, but, for your lives, you little monkeys, don't preach to them. They are, probably, without in the least knowing it, fifty times better Christians than you; and if anybody is to preach, let *them*. Make friends of them when they are nice, as you do of nice rich people; feel with them, work with them, and if you are not at last sure it is a pleasure to you both to see each other, keep out of their way. For material charity, let older and wiser people see to it; and be content, like Athenian maids in the procession of their home-goddess, with the honour of carrying the basket." How much is taught by the example of a girl or woman who lives her life in this fashion!

Some may consider that women who have experience and knowledge of life make more useful district visitors than young girls, but no one will deny that the Sunday School is the place where our girls can best use their talents of teaching and influencing. Our girls, with their bright looks and pretty, winning ways, are perhaps better able to attract children than graver and older folks; their young fancies will find congenial exercise in weaving Bible stories into word-pictures for the little ones to gaze at and learn from; their fresh, brave, living courage will break down barriers of dulness, and make its way into sluggish brains, where other and more jaded teachers

would fail. Then the elder boys, when they gather round their lady teacher, draw refinement from mere contact with her gentle voice and manners—refinement that will colour their home lives and their intercourse with sweethearts and wives and daughters. They gradually learn to yield to her soft but queenly influence, and to be ashamed of coarse vices when they enter her presence. They listen while she shows them the upward way, and follow her kindly yet steadfast leading. If our girls want work that will call out every noblest, most earnest faculty of heart and soul, let them strive to train themselves for work like this.

As it is the duty of women to be ladies and wives, that is to say, according to the derivation of the words lady and wife, to feed and clothe people, so it is equally their duty to guide and teach as many children and ignorant adults as they possibly can. There is no position in life in which a woman can make herself so useful as in that of a teacher. If she who rocks the cradle rules the world, so does she who moulds the first years of the life of the rising generation. The Jewish Rabbis had so profound a sense of the dignity of instruction, that they tell how once, when all the greatest priests and Pharisees had vainly prayed for rain in the time of drought, at last one man arose, who was humble and poorly dressed, and no sooner had he prayed than the heavens became black with clouds and the rain fell. "Who art thou?" they asked whom God has thus answered, "I am a teacher of little children."

Until recently, the profession of teacher was the only one that an educated girl could follow. Even now, when so many other openings have been made for her, it is still the one to

which she turns most naturally, and in which she is perhaps more likely to succeed than in any other.

"Teaching, to me," said an enthusiastic young school-mistress, "is a holy calling. To sow in the young mind the seeds of future knowledge, and watch them as they grow and develop, is a pleasure greater than I can tell. I never weary of my work. I think only of——" "I am very sorry," interrupted the young man to whom she was talking, "that you are so devoted to your profession, Miss Clara. I had hoped that some day I might ask you—in fact I called to-night to—but I hardly dare go on, in the light of what you——" "You may go on, Mr. Smith," said the young lady, softly; "I am a little too enthusiastic at times, perhaps." It is to be feared that many poor girls have not as much interest in the work of teaching as they fancy they have, or pretend to have. They take it up only as a means of earning a living, and naturally soon weary of the work, and feel conscious that they are failures. Every girl thinks that she is capable of teaching, than which there can be no greater mistake. Having knowledge and imparting knowledge are by no means synonymous. To educate or bring out a child's faculties to their highest development is a task only to be accomplished by the possessors of very fine moral qualities. No amount of mere information will supply want of firmness, justice, patience, and liveliness of manner on the part of the teacher. Genius has been defined as "long patience," but this definition would suit equally well good teaching. Patience, as well as imagination, is required by teachers to note the difficulties of pupils from their point of view. It is not enough to repeat explanations in the same

words. A child may see a thing in one light and not in another ; and here there is room for great ingenuity in discovering more and more intelligible statements—in ringing the changes of explanation. If in instructing a child you are vexed with it for want of adroitness, try, if you have never tried before, to write with your left hand, and remember that a child is all left hand.

It need hardly be pointed out how much genuine sympathy a teacher must have with childhood to understand it. Some teachers seem incapable of thinking back on their own early youth, and give their pupils the impression that they have always been grown up. Feeling in this way not understood, or misunderstood, a child has not courage to state his difficulties. She who is not a student of human nature must fail as a teacher. One of the rules laid down for the guidance of chaplains to military prisons should be equally obeyed in reference to children : “ He shall endeavour by all means in his power, and particularly by encouraging their confidence, to obtain an intimate knowledge of the character and disposition of all prisoners.” The early Jesuits, who were masters of education, were accustomed to keep secret registers of their observations on their pupils ; and generations afterwards, when these records were examined, it is said the happy prescience of their remarks was strikingly proved by the subsequent success of many who had attained fame.

Another practice of these Jesuits should be noted by those who foolishly think that it requires little ability and knowledge to teach young children. In their schools they used to hand over the youngest and least advanced pupils to the best

teachers. While any one with industry, a good memory, and a fair amount of brains, can by cramming obtain sufficient knowledge to instruct in the mysteries of the "higher education," there are not many who possess such gifts of mind and temper as enable them to deal wisely with little children, to develop their intellect and mould their characters. Infant education should be considered the highest branch of the profession of teaching. The worse the material, the greater the skill of the worker.

In the case of the teacher, where liveliness is so all-important, a lifeless manner will fail to be successful in putting information into children. Let the teacher who is always complaining of the inattention of her pupils sometimes ask herself: "Have I given them anything to attend to?" The teacher must not be a lifeless note of interrogation. Rather she should be the match that fires the train of her pupils' thoughts. Her questions will be suggestive, asked not to confound but to encourage. She should know when her assistance is required, and when not being required it should not be given. As much as possible should be done *by* children themselves, and as little as possible *for* them. A good teacher does not think out the lesson for her pupils. Rather she becomes the cause of thinking in them, knowing as she does that "Easy come, easy go," is a saying quite as applicable to knowledge as to wealth. Of course this implies that the teacher should continue herself to learn, else her mind would become lifeless and incapable of kindling thought in others. An able teacher is never satisfied with the knowledge she may possess at any time during her career of teaching, but keeps herself in

constant training by fresh draughts hastily snatched during recreation hours.

And she has her reward in finding that her own mind is receiving the best possible culture, for as the Latin proverb says, "If you would be wise, read; if more wise, study; if wisest of all, teach." Nor is the moral improvement that comes from the work of the teacher if well done less than the intellectual.

"O'er wayward children would'st thou hold firm rule,
And sun thee in the light of happy faces?
Love, Hope, and Patience—these must be thy graces,
But in thine own heart let them first keep school.
For, as old Atlas on his broad back places
Heaven's starry globe, and there supports it, so
Do these uphold the little world below
Of Education, Patience, Hope, and Love."

When we reflect that the calling of a teacher is one than which there is none more high or more holy, we cannot but feel indignant at the way vulgarians treat their governesses. Speaking of the education of girls, Mr. Ruskin asks, "Is a girl likely to think her own conduct, or her own intellect of much importance, when you trust the entire formation of her character, moral and intellectual, to a person whom you (mothers) let your servants treat with less respect than they do your housekeeper (as if the soul of your child were a less charge than jams and groceries), and whom you yourself think you confer an honour upon by letting her sometimes sit in the drawing-room in the evening?"

Teaching is only a form of that highest and most proper

kind of woman's work in the world—the work of influencing. Never forget or waste this mighty power which lies in your hands, but hold and prize it as a solemn, precious trust from God ; and use it so that one day your ears may hear with joy the blessed words, “ Well done, good and faithful servant.”





CHAPTER VII.

BETWEEN SCHOOL AND MARRIAGE.

"Idle time not idly spent."—*Sir Henry Walton.*



THE time between school and marriage in a girl's life corresponds to that in a man's which is passed in a university, or in learning the work of his profession. A few, no doubt, go to Girton, Newnham, and other colleges for ladies, but the majority of girls look on this time as a *mauvais quart d'heure*, which may be dawdled through in an irresponsible way until they have a house of their own. Marriage represents a home, a position; sometimes even less than that—a trousseau, or a wedding tour. So they hasten through the years of adolescence as well as may be in order to reach the end of a wearisome task.

And yet if the girl is mother to the woman—that is to say, if the woman will be what the girl now is, this time, which is

essentially one for settling habits, cannot be anything less than the most important in life. If the girl spend it in thoughtless idleness and discontented trifling, the result will be seen in the character of the woman. It is well for any of us when our work is cut out for us, so to speak, and we have not to look about for a profitable way of passing the time; but this last is the miserable condition of many girls belonging to daughter-full houses in easy circumstances. What can they do between school and marriage?

Dr. Johnson shall answer for us. During a visit of a certain Miss Brown to Streatham, he asked her several questions that she could not answer. "As he held her so cheap," writes Madame D'Arblay, "in regard to books, he began to question her concerning domestic affairs,—puddings, pies, plain work, and so forth. Miss Brown, not at all more able to give a good account of herself in these articles than in the others, began all her answers with 'Why, sir, one need not be obliged to do so, —or so,' whatever was the thing in question. When he had finished his interrogatories, and she had finished her 'need nots,' he ended the discourse with saying, 'As to your needs, my dear, they are so very many, that you would be frightened yourself if you knew half of them.'"

A visitor in Dublin was asked by a car-driver if he wanted a car. "No," said he, "I am able to walk." "May your honour long be able, but seldom willing," was the witty rejoinder. There are some girls of whom between school and marriage much the same might be said. Many useful things they are able to do in their homes, but they are seldom willing.

Those girls soon slide into uselessness, and drift aimlessly

through their golden girlhood, who have no system in the ordering of their lives. We ought not to be chained to our system, but we should arrange our time so as to improve every precious moment, and find facility in the performance of our respective duties. Especially valuable are the hours between ten o'clock and one. These should be occupied with study, music (if you really have a taste for it), or the learning of some useful art by which you could earn your living if required to do so. Would anybody be worse, and would not everybody be much better, if girls of all ranks were taught to do something so well that they could earn money if necessary? Habits of attention, method, and dispatch, acquired in the study of any fine handicraft or art, lay a better basis for the character of a noble house-mother than the idle sauntering of common girl existence. The daughters of wealthy families need not rush into the labour market simply because they have the power to do so. Because they can engrave they need not be engravers, any more than they need become servants because they can dust a room or cook a potato. Usefulness of any kind may be kept in store if not immediately wanted as current coin.

There is such a thing as adult education, and we may learn from everybody and everything until the day of our death, so that nothing is more ridiculous than to speak of a girl's education being "finished" when she leaves school. She need not keep up the routine of school work, but she may at least try to keep what she has learnt with much difficulty and drudgery. "It is less pain to learn in youth than to be ignorant in age;" and, indeed, it is only the first steps to the Temple of Wisdom that are the painful ones. Every girl ought to make the most

of herself, and gain accurate and general information on the subjects that interest intelligent people. Why should she give up study at eighteen, just at a time when, having got beyond the rudiments, the work of teaching herself would after some time become so enjoyable that it would in many cases be continued even after marriage? When books are looked upon by a girl on leaving school as instruments of mental torture, she is stopping her education just when she has reached its most interesting phase.

But mind and body are co-partners, and while cultivating the one a girl must not injure the other. In after life she will require all the health and vigour of body she can obtain from riding, swimming, tennis, rowing, and the gymnastic exercises which have now been made to suit girls. These games, if practised in moderation, and in suitable clothes without lung-compressing corsage, will give a firm hand, a trained eye, a clear complexion, and the light-heartedness which comes of a body unclogged in its machinery. They will confirm health and perfect beauty.

Girls who have been well brought up dress with simplicity; they are occupied, but not preoccupied, with dress. Two young men the other day were heard commenting, *sotto voce*, upon a girl who was attracting attention. "Yes; very pretty," said one, "but entirely spoilt by that terrible hat trimmed with giblets!" The head-covering thus alluded to was decorated with an arrangement of a bird's head, feathered neck, and claws.

What wonderful things are the bonnets sometimes to be seen! Some consist of a stuffed bird fixed upon a piece of muslin, others of a strip of lace and two beads.

Tender-hearted Young Lady: "Oh, you cruel, heartless little wretch! to rob those poor birds of their eggs."

Wicked Little Boy: "Ho! that's the old mother bird that you've got on yer bonnet. Guess she won't care."

Of course it is difficult for a girl to keep pace with the very latest absurdity if she make her own gowns and bonnets, but it is a great help to papa's pocket to do so, as it also is when she undertakes the elementary teaching of younger brothers and sisters.

Maud: "Isn't it a queer title for a book, mother, 'Not Like Other Girls'?' I wonder what she can be if she is not like other girls?"

Mother: "I don't know, unless she goes into the kitchen and helps her mother, instead of staying in the drawing-room to read novels."

"What can I do to help mother?" This should be a question with all girls. In a large and well-ordered home the daughters supervise different departments. One becomes responsible for the arrangement of the kitchen and dining-room, and sees that the table is properly furnished with viands and the economy of everything downstairs administered wisely. Another takes charge of the drawing-room or bedrooms. The next week, perhaps, they change employments; and in this way their mother has time to read, to go out, to receive friends, and to take a well-earned holiday.

We agree with Mrs. Warren in thinking that there is no household work that a girl should deem it beneath her position to know how to do it. To scrub floors, scour saucepans, black-lead and clean grates, to black boots, to clean plate, to wash

and iron—all these things may be done in a right or a wrong way, and it is only by learning how they ought to be done that a woman can teach others. Whether her destiny lies in the old country or in the colonies, her knowledge of home matters will be the greatest of blessings to herself and to others. Every day a young lady should do a little bit of household work thoroughly, so as to be a pattern of perfection to the servants, who are only too ready to be satisfied with half-done work or “That’ll do.”

Needlework is generally distasteful to girls, especially plain work. But surely mother can’t be expected to see, after the “mendings” by herself, or with such help as the busy servants can give her! It would be well in a large family if each daughter had her own department of mending, for which she was responsible. Mother should never “see to” her own gloves amongst thoughtful girls, much less to father’s or the boys’.

Visitors are often tiresome to your mother. You might help to entertain them. Perhaps they detain you, even, from a fairly-earned hour of recreation; but you are doing something kind and self-denying whilst you listen to their wearisome talk, and you are saving mother from being thoroughly “tired out.”

It is sometimes thought that if women are learned they are nearly sure to neglect their domestic duties, or that, in the witty words of Sidney Smith, “if women are permitted to eat of the tree of knowledge, the rest of the family will soon be reduced to some ærial and unsatisfactory diet.” Mrs. Somerville, the great mathematician, was a living proof of the folly of this opinion. She was an excellent housewife and a par-

ticularly skilful needlewoman. She astonished those who thought a scientific woman could not understand anything of cookery by her notable preparation of black currant jelly for her husband's throat on their wedding journey. On one occasion she supplied with marmalade, made by her own hands, one of the ships that were being fitted out for a Polar expedition.

Writing of university life for women in *Cassell's Family Magazine*, a scholar of Newnham College says: "Nowhere have I heard it more consistently and reverently asserted that a woman's true sphere is the home. Most of the ladies rather pride themselves on their domestic accomplishments. Among my own contemporaries were some whose nimble fingers could wield the needle as well as the pen, and produce with equal ease a copy of Latin verses or a fashionable bonnet. Others could send up a dinner not to be despised by the most fastidious of College Fellows." Indeed, it is only reasonable to surmise that the girl who would neglect domestic duties for her studies, would equally neglect them for frivolous pursuits and dissipation.

As soon as a girl comprehends what duty really means, and attempts to do it, she first tries to do her work at home, and then looks out for work abroad. She does her best to relieve the indigent, to teach the ignorant, and to bring joy to the sad. There are societies established in every district to carry out these benevolent enterprises, and the directors are very glad to receive offers of help, and willingly give work to those who will undertake it.

We have heard of an Eastern custom which enjoined that on the day of her marriage the bride should sit all the afternoon

with her face to the wall. If any one spoke she was not to answer. This was supposed to typify her grief at leaving the state of single blessedness. An English girl may not feel this poignant grief at getting married, but if she can make her girlhood happy by putting it to a good account, she will be able to wait in dignified tranquillity until the right man comes to claim her, instead of throwing herself away upon the first worthless person who desires to marry and make a woman miserable. As to what she can do to make herself more attractive, it depends on the kind of man she wishes to attract. If, however, she desire a good, worthy husband, she had better use no art, but simply be her own natural self. Let her cultivate the powers of her mind, engage in good and useful work, both within and without the home, study to acquire practical knowledge of domestic affairs, and trust that, if it is most expedient for her, God, the best Maker of marriages, will send a husband of her choice.

That girls, either in school or out, think much or seriously upon the theme of marriage, I do not believe. They like fun, admiration, pleasant badinage, the homage to which their youth and the beauty of youth entitle them from the other sex. Some of them—the number far fewer now than in former years—have a dread of old maidenhood, and foolishly accept the first offer, in a dread that they may never receive another. Fortunately, the many doors to self-support now open to women, and the improved public opinion which honours the woman who works, at least equally with her sister who neither toils nor spins, have made marrying for a home, once too common, to be regarded as the disgrace it is.



CHAPTER VIII.

CATECHISM BEFORE MARRIAGE.

"*Mrs. Mlnage* : ' Now that you are so soon to be married and go to house-keeping, Franceline, I would suggest that you go into the kitchen for a few hours every day.' *Franceline* : ' Why, mamma, I am sure that Charley never asked me to be his wife to get his dinner.' *Mrs. M.* : ' But, my dear, to know the names of things in a kitchen will give you so much confidence in your ability to scold your servants.' "—*Conversation Reported.*

" Marrying is easy enough ; it is housekeeping that is hard, and the husbands of women who have become wives without preparing themselves for the duties of marriage discover wherf too late the bitter truth of the saying that ' You can't make a good wife by putting a gold ring on her finger, any more than you can make a good joiner by buying him a box of tools.' "—*Anonymous.*



ATECHISM Before Marriage " is the name of a picture I remember to have seen in the Historical Society's collection in New York. The scene is the kitchen of a peasant's house in Belgium. A fatherly old priest is sitting in an easy chair, catechizing a shy, stupid bridegroom elect. At a

little distance is his lady-love, looking nervously at her husband to be, and anxiously awaiting the result of his qualifying examination. She would gladly help him by judicious prompting, but the curé is keeping a sharp eye upon her. The girl's mother is too busy preparing a repast for the priest, or making arrangements for the wedding breakfast, to take notice of matters so far beyond her comprehension. The picture is thus described in the catalogue: "Catechism before marriage, according to Belgian law, being necessary for State and matrimonial security."

Surely this was a wise law of the Belgians, which provided that there should be some sort of preparation for marriage—that, before entering upon such a serious undertaking, young people should have learned how to behave towards each other, or, in other words, their duty towards God and their neighbours, as taught in the catechism. Each family is a unit of the nation, and it is by the right performance of family duties that nations are built up and preserved.

In the picture it was about the amount of knowledge of catechism possessed by the bridegroom that the curé was anxious, but in this chapter we are going to say something about the preparation which the bride must have if she is to rightly perform her matrimonial duties. And here we would like to quote the downright words spoken by Mrs. Heywood to the young woman who thought that catechisms before marriage, and every other kind of preparation, were altogether superfluous. "Oh, yes!" broke in Mrs. Heywood, "you thought a woman took to housekeeping as a duck takes to water. Not a bit of it! Keeping house has to be learned like anything

else, and those who don't learn it before marriage, will have to learn it after, or live in a mess all their lives, as many do. 'Look before you leap' is my advice to young women. They all mean to marry, but I'd like to know how many try to learn what will make them good wives."

Daughter (home from school): "Now, father, are you satisfied? Just look at my testimonial. Political economy, satisfactory; fine art and music, very good; logic, excellent!"

Father: "Very much so, my dear, especially as regards your future. If your husband should understand anything of housekeeping, cooking, mending, and the use of a sewing-machine, your married life will indeed be happy."

We believe in the higher, yes, in the highest possible, education for girls, so long as they are trained at the same time in domestic duties. All girls cannot marry moneyed men, nor can they be sure, in the uncertain conditions of modern life, but that men who are rich to-day may be poor and struggling in a short year or two; and surely these men have a right to expect that the women they place at the head of the homes they have, in many cases, toiled hard to make shall be able to teach servants to carry out their plans, or, if need be, to throw themselves into the breach, and, unassisted, carry on the household machinery without a jar.

X.: "I am surprised at the appearance of your friend B. He looks wretched. Do you know if he has been disappointed in love?" Z.: "No; he has been disappointed in marriage."

Here are some sensible words from the preface of a little book which Mrs. Warren has written about the perplexities of a young

wife who enters the difficult situation of matrimony without preparing herself for its responsibilities. "Thousands of men and women have wedded and parted in mutual dislike, simply because of the wife's ignorance in managing properly a limited income, and ignorance of the details which bind a husband to his home. The neglect and unthrifty ways that make a man a roamer may often be traced to a girl-wife's faulty education. If our words could influence mothers, we would suggest that, in addition to scholastic knowledge and the acquisition of accomplishments necessary to a girl's position or needs, she should be daily taught to practise some useful household art, also the more difficult one of managing children and servants."

In "How to be Happy Though Married" I have quoted from the "Records of Later Life," in which Fanny Kemble (Mrs. Butler), shortly after she had begun housekeeping with a staff of six servants, writes from America to a friend, "I have been reproaching myself, and reproving others, and heartily regretting that, instead of Italian and music, I had not learned a little domestic economy, and how much bread, butter, flour, eggs, milk, sugar, and meat ought to be consumed per week by a family of eight persons." There is no reason why she should not have learned all this, and Italian and music as well.

One of the Oxford nonsense rhymes has a terrible significance in its inner meaning :

"'Who will marry you, my pretty maid?'

'Advanced women don't marry, sir,' she said."

Though it would be a pity for the talented women of a generation not to marry, it would be much kinder to the men not to

do so if by "advanced" is meant having a knowledge of everything except household duties.

But what has this to do, it may be asked, with the catechism? Does man live by bread alone, and is religion to be brought down in this way to the kitchen? Here is the connection. The catechism teaches a woman to do her duty to God and her neighbour, and that the one cannot be properly done if the other be neglected. Now there is no nearer neighbour to a wife than her husband, and though he does not live by bread alone, yet he does not live without bread, and his work and temper will not be good if the bread be badly made.

We are in the habit of giving a too narrow interpretation to divine service, as when we say, "Divine Service will be performed at — church, at — o'clock." Is not divine service performed in every house in the parish where the housewife does her duty—in the kitchen where she cooks or looks after cookery; in the nursery, where she nurses or directs how it should be done; in the room which she sweeps "as for God's laws"?

You have perhaps read the beautiful legend of Francesca. Tradition says that she was a noble lady of Rome, who, amid the splendours of court life and the pageantry of a lofty station, preserved the simplicity of that consecration which loves to sit at the feet of the Lord. Every day at certain periods she retired to her oratory, there to engage in exercises of devotion; but if called away, as she often was, she went cheerfully, saying that "a wife and mother, when called upon, must quit her God at the altar, and find Him in her household affairs."

Francesca had a far truer idea of religion than those ladies have who go to frequent church services and engage in district visiting, while they neglect their children and servants, the first district to which they should attend. One lady said to another, "Have you been to church to-day? We had a most beautiful sermon on training children." "No, I was at home doing it," was the reply. Certainly without religion a woman is a monster who is unfit to marry or do anything else that is good; but, like charity, it should begin at home.

Of course we do not mean that a girl should prepare herself to be only a housewife on her marriage. She cannot cultivate her mind with too great care if her future husband is to respect and love her as a companion, and one who, having acquired a good knowledge of "affairs," can give him practical advice. But whatever she does learn she should learn accurately. A woman may always help her husband by what she knows, however little; by what she half-knows, or mis-knows, she will only tease him. Elementary knowledge is always useful; superficial knowledge is never anything else than misleading.

The head-mistress of a ladies' school in the suburbs of London was lecturing a pert young miss of thirteen upon her idleness and general indifference to her studies. French and German she treated as some people think dead languages should be treated—with studied neglect; mathematics and science she regarded with undisguised contempt. After commenting for some time upon the wickedness of this attitude, the head-mistress, herself an unmarried lady, opened up the delicate question of her young pupil's probable future. "Think, my dear Emily, how important it is to improve your mind now,

so as to fit yourself for the battle of life." "Battle of life, indeed," replied Emily, "I don't understand you, Miss P——. Don't you know I am going to be married!" This was not bad for a thirteen-year-old. But it shows the direction in which our daughters' minds may be drifting, and it is as well, perhaps, that they should let it be known if only in order that some antidote may be applied. Probably the notion had got into this particular young head through a careless remark by a friend of the family made in her hearing.

The antidote to be applied to this state of mind is, to convince girls that, granting they are going to marry, ignorance is not a very desirable marriage-portion for them to bring to their future husbands. If only for the sake of the one whom it is to be hoped she will marry for love, a girl should desire to make the most of herself and of all her gifts. We know that learning by itself will not make a good wife, but neither will ignorance, and we would much prefer to chance our happiness with a woman whose intellectual powers have been trained, than with one whose mind is like an unweeded garden. Neither man nor woman has any basis of character without intelligence. A wife should be able to maintain intelligent conversation with her husband and his friends, and this requires the cultivation of general intelligence because she must not seem to be book-wise and scientific, as men may, but to have, as it were, the flavour of knowledge in herself naturally.

Any accomplishment is worth cultivating that may help to make home attractive to husband and sons; but the best acquirements for this purpose are no doubt moral rather than intellectual. They are a good temper and a habit of looking

on the bright side of things. A cheerful temper, not occasionally, but habitually cheerful, is a quality which no wise man would be willing to dispense with in choosing a wife. A good wife is courteous, gentle, and sweet in all her dealings. She may be a plain woman, but she takes pains to be always fascinating. Her first thought is—never to disarrange, even for an instant, that drapery of pleasantness which a woman should always wear. She knows that if it is the duty of a husband to make the money, it is hers to make life ornamental and charming for him. Her perpetual aim is to give pleasure, to be agreeable, and to be amiable, and she succeeds in making “a happy fireside clime,” which “is the true pathos and sublimity of human life.” All this, however, requires catechism before marriage.

Literary husbands and men of genius have sometimes had to complain that their wives became childishly jealous of their life-work. The philosopher of antiquity who would not raise his eyes for three years, lest they should rest upon a woman, had no doubt suffered from some woman’s aggravating ways while he was trying to devote himself to the abstractions of philosophy. This is a common failing of common minds. A woman has torn the canvas from the easel where her husband was at work, in a fit of jealous rage ; another, with grim determination, always chose the time when the author sat down to write, to practise her scales, or pound at some terrible sonata ; and one (though such cruel malignity is scarcely credible) has been even known to hum a tune in the very room where her poet husband was striving to finish a beautiful and elaborate sonnet. And all this out of spite and jealousy for some

fancied neglect! If such women ever learned the catechism before being married they must have thought that a husband was a being too inferior to be included in the term "neighbour," in that part which teaches the duty we owe to our neighbour.

The months preceding matrimony might well be spent by girls more suitably than in the mere preparation of an elaborate wardrobe. If when they become engaged they would enter upon a course of training, such as any person preparing for any other profession would deem it folly to neglect, it would be an immense gain to the world. Too many look upon marriage as the end of all their trials and efforts, when it is really only the beginning. This idea of studying beforehand, as for a business or profession, may seem a ludicrously practical one, but I am convinced that if it were carried out it would save many a heart-ache.





CHAPTER IX.

CHOOSING A HUSBAND.

"Ga'her the rose-buds while ye may,
 Old Time is still a-flying,
 And this same flower that smiles to-day,
 To-morrow will be dying.

Then be not coy, but use your time,
 And while ye may, go marry ;
 For, having lost but once your prime,
 You may for ever tarry."—*Herrick.*



WHEN a girl has learned catechism before marriage, or, in other words, has prepared herself physically, mentally, and morally for that holy state, the next thing is to choose a husband. "O me, the word choose ! I may neither choose whom I would, nor refuse whom I dislike"—this is what many a girl who would make a good wife has to say. She cannot choose the man she would, for perhaps it is not in his power to marry

her, or he may possibly (this is of course a most unlikely supposition) be unwilling to do so. She cannot refuse whom she dislikes without incurring the risk of never getting another chance of escaping from the unnatural condition of celibacy. Still we cannot help believing that a girl is morally bound to refuse any man she does not love, and that it is far better to have no husband than a bad one.

We do not advise girls to put off marriage until they are 380 years old, which was, I believe, the age of the daughter of Enoch when she entered the state of holy matrimony ; but we think that they do not consult their best interests when they allow thoughts of love and marriage to occupy their minds in their "salad days," when they are "green in judgment." This precociousness works mischief in many ways. It prevents the enjoyment of happy years of maidenhood, when the mind and heart are free to expand under healthful influences ; it prevents improving and elevating study ; it occupies the mind with fancies, desires, and castle-building, which are not only futile but injurious ; it indisposes for sensible views of life ; it tends to the formation of a shallow and frivolous character ; and it not unfrequently leads to foolish entanglements and hasty attachments, which cause much anxiety and distress. Sometimes it leads to marriage before either husband or wife know what they are doing, and before the girl is fit either physically, mentally, or domestically for the cares of married life.

There are some persons who never seem to think that love has a sacred and a serious side, that it is more than "a modern fair one's jest," more than a fit subject for banter and fun. And yet if you women think lightly of love you may be sure

that men will do so ; they will not set a great price upon it if you hold it cheap ; they will laugh at you behind your backs, and say things which you would scarcely like to hear, if you throw your heart at every one who shows ordinary attention and politeness. When girls strive by a thousand studied wiles to win attention they forget the dignity and rights that belong to their sex. So did not a spirited Scotch lass, who, when an eligible *parti* proposed marriage rather too bluntly, thus replied, " 'Deed, Jamie, I'll tak' ye, but ye maun gie me my dues o' courtin' for a' that."

"Marry thy daughter," says the son of Sirach, "and so shalt thou have performed a weighty matter : but give her to a man of understanding." A considerable share of this "weighty matter" generally falls upon a mother's shoulders, and a match-making mother is not a very popular character. Nor is the ridicule she receives undeserved when she cares everything for money and position in a son-in-law, and nothing at all for mental and moral qualities. In very different estimation ought that mother to be held who seeks to give her daughter to "a man of understanding." By a "man of understanding" is probably meant what we should now call an intelligent, conscientious, well-principled man. It is almost a truism to say that this is the character in a husband that makes the happiness of a wife. An Irish magistrate asked a prisoner if he was married. "No," replied the man. "Then," said his worship, "it is a good thing for your wife." A private in the army recently sent a letter to his sweetheart, closing with "May Heaven cherish and keep you from yours truly John Smith." A young fellow offers his hand in marriage to a

young woman, and if she would only stop to inquire she would find that he is a shiftless, good-for-nothing fellow, who will never make her happy, and that a union with him must entail upon her untold miseries. But because he is good-looking, or has a plausible tongue, and p'eads his cause eloquently, she says, "Yes," and walks in darkness and gloom all the rest of her life. "When I marry," said a budding schoolgirl, "I'll want a fine, large, tall, handsome man, that everybody will admire." "There's where you're wrong, sis," said her elder and more practical sister. "You'd have much less trouble in watching a less good looking man, and would enjoy a great deal more of his society."

Nor would I advise a girl to marry any man who does not properly value women and women's love. *Captain Jawkins*: "No, I'm not exactly engaged, but I have the refusal of two or three girls." *Miss Ethel*: "What a capital way of putting it! I suppose you mean you have asked them, and they have said 'No.'"

The Rev. J. Marshall Morrell thus writes:—

"Not many months ago I was present in a family in the north, when the following scene occurred: Dinner was about to be served when the husband entered, sullen and irritated. At some word from his wife he flew into a passion, threw over the dining-table, raved and cursed and swore. The servants fled, the children were hastily carried out, and soon the gentlemen followed. I asked the lady if she knew of his drinking habits before marriage. She replied, 'No, or not till the day before, and that was too late, of course.' It was not too late; five minutes before was not too late. Yea, had the

knowledge come to her as she stood at God's altar, she would have been justified in answering the question, Wilt thou have this man to thy wedded husband? by an emphatic 'No.' No woman is justified in linking herself to a man for life who is the victim of a fatal passion, and to bring children into the world to be cursed by such a parent."

The American temperance orator, John Gough, says, in "Gleanings from My Life Work":—

"Public men are liable to receive communications containing inquiries on all kinds of topics, asking questions on all kinds of abstruse subjects, or making the most absurd propositions. I give a portion of a letter I received from a lady:—

"I will state my circumstances and wishes as briefly as possible. I come to the point at once, and inform you that I wish to get married, and I hope you will think none the worse of me for thus making my wants known to one who must have a large circle of acquaintances, like yourself. When a lady finds her hair fast becoming threads of silver, and the crow's-feet deepening in her face, it is time for her to begin to look out for herself, if she would not spend her declining days in loneliness, 'unloved and unloving'—a prospect that I do not at all relish, unless I find that it be God's will. If so, I must make the best of it. I am thirty-five years of age; very unprepossessing in appearance, having a dark complexion, plain, sad features; only four feet ten inches in height; weight ninety to ninety-eight pounds; and health quite variable, still good. Physicians have told me that I am just as likely to live forty years as any one.

"My father's home is in —, away back in the country,

where there is not a gentleman of my acquaintance that I would marry, even if they wished to marry me. I wish to get a kind, honest man, about fifty years of age, possessing common intelligence and refinement, and at least property sufficient to take care of himself and me ; and he must be between forty-five and sixty-five years of age, and a total-abstinence man ; widower preferred ; also one who would care more for home and wife than society. And I, on my part, think I could be a true and an affectionate wife, capable of managing a household, and willing to dress and live either in a plain and economical style, or luxuriously, as our mutual views and circumstances might seem to require."

A pathetic letter certainly, especially if it is to be regarded as speaking for even a larger number of British than of American women. In their haste to be married such persons are too easily satisfied with the characters of men who may offer themselves as husbands.

A coquette is a young lady of more beauty than sense ; more accomplishments than learning ; more charms of person than graces of mind ; more admirers than friends ; and more fools than wise men for attendants. Many young girls throw away their chances of marrying happily by their frivolity and their inordinate love of flirtation. Though these flirtations may be perfectly harmless, yet they keep off a man who has a *penchant* for a girl. Flirtation, which was not ill described in *Punch* as "a spoon with nothing in it," closely resembles the real article, and a man when he feels himself falling in love with a girl is not in a condition to closely analyze whether the "spoon" has anything in it or not, and, as is generally the case

when in that condition, he is the victim of jealousy, and decides that the "spoon" has something in it, and therefore withdraws from the contest.

A farmer's daughter was carrying her pail of milk from the field to the farm-house, when she fell a-musing. "The money for which this milk will be sold, will buy at least three hundred eggs. The eggs, allowing for all mishaps, will produce two hundred and fifty chickens. The chickens will become ready for the market when poultry will fetch the highest price; so that by the end of the year I shall have money enough from the perquisites that will fall to my share, to buy a new gown. In this dress I will go to the Christmas junketings, when all the young fellows will propose to me, but I will toss my head, and refuse them every one." At this moment she tossed her head in unison with her thoughts, when down fell the milk-pail to the ground, and all her imaginary schemes perished in a moment.

The lessons that a young lady may learn from this fable of *Æsop* are obvious. Do not play fast and loose with an eligible *parti*. Remember what *Rosalind* says in *As You Like It*—

"But, mistress, know yourself; down on your knees,
And thank Heaven, fasting, for a good man's love;
For I must tell you friendly in your ear,
Sell when you can; you are not for all markets;
Cry the man mercy; love him; take his offer."

If you hold your head too high and despise men who would have you, you will be despised by those at whom you "set your cap."

Nobody is bettered, but a great many excellent people may

be estranged by a social gulf between wife and husband. Though a husband may raise a wife, a wife can do very little to raise her husband. Lord Lytton tells a story of a groom married to a rich lady, and in constant trepidation of being ridiculed by the guests in his new home. An Oxford clergyman gave him this advice : "Wear a black coat and hold your tongue." The lady, we should think, must often have been in still greater trepidation. She would have had to blush whenever her life-partner opened his mouth lest he should proceed, as the Irishman said, to "put his foot in it."

To punish a lover who has given some real or imaginary offence, a woman will sometimes marry a rival for whom she cares nothing. She who thus marries from pique might be described as cutting off her nose to vex her face, were not her wickedness to be spoken of more seriously.

There is another cause of loveless marriages which, though it leans to virtue's side, produces scarcely less misery. When a conscientious man has gone too far with a girl he may feel bound to marry her even though his affections have become estranged. With an air of celestial resignation he proposes to offer himself upon Hymen's altar. Certainly a man has no right to trifle with affection or to allow his feelings when plighted to be fickle. We think, however, that the girl who permits this sort of martyrdom consults neither her dignity nor her happiness.

Shakespeare says in reference to a husband's age :

"Let the woman still take
An elder than herself ; so wears she to him,
So sways she level in her husband's heart.

For, boy, however we do praise ourselves,
Our fancies are more giddy and unfirm,
More longing, wavering, sooner lost and worn,
Than women's are."

A countrywoman had married a rather worthless fellow. She was asked why, and gave a very satisfactory reason, which we give in anglicised spelling: "Doan' ye zee, zur, I'd a-got sa much warshin', an' I waz a force' to zen et 'oam, an' if I 'ad n' a-had *he*, I mus' a-bought a donk." We cannot respect girls who marry men only because they will feed and clothe them; but what else can some of the poor things do? They have not been trained, like their brothers, to useful work, and have always been told that woman's first, best occupation is—to be a wife. To which it may be answered—

"Most true; but to make a mere business of marriage,
To call it a 'living,' 'vocation,' 'career,'
Is but to pervert, degrade, and disparage
A contract of all the most sacred and dear."

Women should not marry for money, but neither should they marry without it, for as a practical girl once remarked, "a kiss and a tin full of cold water make a very poor breakfast." It is, however, much better to marry a good and wise man, though poor, than a rich fool, who will give gilded misery. To be contented, though poor, is to be rich enough, but this is what some people cannot see.

A wealthy farmer in Connecticut gives the following as his own experience:—"When I first came here to settle, about forty years ago, I told my wife I wanted to be rich. She said she did not want to be rich—all she wanted was enough to

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make her comfortable. I went to work and cleared up my land ; I've worked hard ever since, and got rich—as rich as I want to be. Most of my children have settled about me, and they have all got farms—and my wife ain't comfortable yet."

They were walking in the conservatory at the last White House reception. "Will you love me with all your soul?" she murmured.—"Yes, darling," he answered.—"And all your heart?"—"Yes, dearest.—"And all your ——?"—"Everything, darling, everything," he interrupted.—"Pocket-book?" she continued, not noticing the interruption. He gasped once, and all was over.

A popular American preacher says when giving advice to women upon this the most important decision in their lives: "I counsel you to unite yourself with a man who is a fortune in himself. Lands, money, and the like are all well enough, but two or three unlucky investments may upturn them. There are men who are fortunes in themselves, who are always genial and large-hearted. But I would also charge you, don't look for a perfect man. If you find a man who is perfect, who is incapable of mistakes, don't unite yourself with him ; what a wife you would make for him ! In other words, there are no perfect men. The only perfect pair slid down the banks of Paradise together. When a man tells us he never sins, we know he lies. I had dealings with two perfect men, and they both cheated me."

Youthful scion of a noble house: "I have come to ask you for the hand of your daughter, Doctor." *Fashionable physician*: "You have?" *Youth*: "Yes, Doctor. I have enough of this world's goods to support her in comfort, even in luxury."

Physician : "Yes, I am aware of that ; but will you treat her kindly? Can I depend upon your making her a good husband?" *Youth* : "Doctor, I swear——" *Physician* : "Oh, never mind swearing, my young friend! Your intentions are all right, no doubt ; but I must be sure that you won't worry her life out after you get her. Take off your coat, and let me sound you to see what condition your liver is in!"

It ought not to matter very much to what business or profession a husband belongs, for a man of ability and energy will make his mark anywhere. That love is not influenced by such considerations may be seen from the reply that was once made by a clear-sighted and candid bride. Roger Kemble, the father of Mrs. Siddons, had always forbidden her to marry an actor. In spite of the old gentleman's prejudice she secretly married one of his company. When Roger Kemble heard of it he was furious. "Have I not," he exclaimed, "dared you to marry a player?" The lady replied, with downcast eyes, that she had not disobeyed. "What, madam, have you not allied yourself to about the worst performer in my company?"

"Exactly so," murmured the timid bride ; "nobody can call him an actor."

The likes and dislikes of a young woman may appear unreasonable to her friends, but it is very difficult to argue them away. "I have no other but a woman's reason : I think him so, because I think him so." This is her only reply.

The following little dialogue is from the "Autobiography of Heinrich Stilling" :—

"Hast thou observed, Doris, that thy future husband has lame feet?"

"Yes, papa," said she, "I have seen it ; but then he speaks to me so kindly and piously that I seldom pay attention to his feet."

"Well, Doris, but young women generally look at a man's figure."

"I, too, papa," was her answer ; "but Wilhelm pleases me just as he is. If he had straight feet, he would not be Wilhelm Stilling ; and how could I love him then ?"

"Two young fools," says Dr. Johnson, "are shut up in a room together, and told that they are to marry, and fancy that they are in love." That is when young people marry to order of parents, but, nowadays, their fancies are seldom so accommodating. Indeed the present generation of young ladies consult their friends rather too little in the matter. Still we do not believe that it is ever a daughter's duty to unite herself to a husband with whom she could not be happy. Parents have no right to entail a legacy of sorrow upon those who will continue to live after they themselves have gone to their account.

A Scotchwoman from the country applied lately to a respectable solicitor in Edinburgh for advice. After detailing the circumstances of the case, she was asked if she had stated the facts exactly as they had occurred. "Ou, ay, sir," rejoined the applicant, "I thought it best to tell you the plain truth ; you can put the lees till't yoursel." We believe that it is wiser, as well as more honourable, for a girl to be as truthful to the man she is going to marry as was this Scotchwoman. She should let his imagination supply the "lees" about her.

Almost every horse is a "screw," but this does not prevent its doing much work and giving considerable pleasure. So the

fact that a man is not quite perfect ought not to hinder him from being a tolerably good "common or garden" husband. Only let the girl who marries him resolve to make the best and not the worst of him. Says the author of "John Halifax Gentleman": "Many a wife goes about making a 'poor mouth' about mere trifles. Her husband has not given her the position she expected; he likes town and she the country, or *vice versa*; he has a good heart but a bad temper; his relatives are unpleasant, or he takes a dislike, just or unjust, to hers. All these minor miseries silly women dwell upon, instead of taking them—and the husband—'for better, for worse,' and striving by all conceivable means—by patience, by self-denial, by courage when necessary, and by silent endurance always, to change worse into better. This can be done, and often is done. If we who have lived long enough to look on life with a larger vision than the young, are often saddened to see how many of the most passionate love-marriages melt away into a middle-age of misery, we have also seen others which, beginning in error and possessing all the elements of future wretchedness, have yet, by wise conduct, generally on the wife's side, ended in something not far short of happiness.

"Every woman who takes upon herself the 'holy estate'—and it is holy—'of matrimony' has to learn soon or late—happy if she learn it soon!—that no two human beings can be tied together for life without finding endless difficulties, not only in the world outside, but in each other. These have to be solved, and generally by the wife. She must have a strong heart, a sweet temper, an unlimited patience, and, above all, a power to see the right, and do it, not merely for the love of

man—‘as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord’ (which was a state of things belonging to a polygamous and not a Christian community)—but for the love of God ; which alone can tide an ill-assorted couple over the rocks and shoals of early married life into a calm sea and a prosperous voyage.”





CHAPTER X.

WHAT BAIT DO YOU USE, LADIES?

"Doctor Franklin, observing one day a hearty young fellow, whom he knew to be an extraordinary blacksmith, sitting on the wharf bobbing for little mud-cats and eels, he called to him—

"'Ah! Tom, what a pity it is you do not fish with a *silver* hook.'

"The young man replied, 'I am not able to fish with a silver hook.'

"Some days after this, the doctor, passing that way, saw Tom at the end of the wharf again, with his long pole bending over the flood.

"'What, Tom!' cried the doctor, 'have you not got the silver hook yet?'"

"'Heaven bless you, sir!' cried the blacksmith, 'I am hardly able to fish with an iron hook.'

"'Pooh! pooh!' replied Franklin; 'go home to your anvil, and you will make silver enough in one day to buy more and better fish than you can catch here in a month.'"—*Life of Franklin.*



"WHAT bait do you use?" is a very important question in the estimation of the disciples of Izaak Walton, and one which they generally ask when they meet brother craftsmen. The other day we were out in a boat fishing on the sea, and were very unsuccessful. This rather surprised us, because

the day before we had good sport, and each one of our number began to speculate on the cause of failure. At last one said, "The fish don't seem to care for this new bait. They nibble now and then, but they won't bite or allow themselves to be caught." It seemed then that, in trying what we supposed would have been a more attractive kind of bait, we had made a mistake.

This set us moralizing about people we had known, who, fishing for compliments and popularity, generally had signally failed. They thought the kind of bait they used the best possible, but it proved to be just the reverse.

We must give all the nice modest girls we know credit for not consciously endeavouring to catch husbands. If men fall in love with them and desire to marry them, and they are the right sort of men, and the girls can love in return, well and good—they marry, and hope to be happy ever after; but they will not run after men, or think in everything they say and do, "Can I catch a fish with this bait?" It must, however, be confessed that there are girls who, instead of making themselves useful and calmly resting in their maiden dignity, think only of getting married, and use questionable means to achieve their purpose. Forgetting the proverb, "The more haste the less speed," this sort of girl not unfrequently assumes a "fast" style of talk, manner, and dress in order to make herself attractive to the opposite sex. In doing so she makes a great mistake. Fish may nibble at her bait, but they will not allow themselves to be caught. A loud girl may attract attention and have half an hour of popularity, but she is a type of the shortsightedness of some of her sex. Men of the baser sort

may amuse themselves with her, but no man worth having would think of marrying her.

There is a liberty that makes us free, and a liberty that makes us slaves, and the girls who take liberties with modesty of speech and manner, and who cross over the boundary into masculine territory, are not more free, but more enslaved than before. And the approbation of men, which is the end in view, is lost by the means taken to gain it. Whatever men may be themselves, they like gentleness, modesty, and purity in act and thought in women. They want their wives to be better than themselves. They think that women should be the conservators of all that is restrained, chivalrous, and gentle.

The *Saturday Review*, whatever else may be said of it, will never be called "goody-goody," and for this reason the words it lately used in an article on "Young Ladies" ought to come with all the more force to those whom it may concern.

"Among some of our young ladies, more especially those who are designated by the term of 'old stagers,' the fatal habit of permitting free and risky conversation has crept in, borrowed as it is from the married women who try to please the men by it. But they do not seem to see the difference; a man may like that style of conversation with a pretty young married woman, for various reasons; but no man in his sober senses would like to hear a girl, for whom he has an attachment and whom he might wish to make his wife, talking thus; it would 'put him off' at once, and make him begin to consider what kind of a wife she would make, and whether she would be worthy in the future of any man's love and confidence. The same mistake is sometimes made by young ladies in conversing

about the *causes célèbres* which are so openly and unreservedly published now in our papers ; and, instead of adding their protest against the disgusting details that the press thinks good to force on the public, by not reading them, they not only read them, but discuss them after. But we are happy to think that the percentage of 'young' ladies who indulge in undesirable talk and doubtful literature is but very small."

Every girl should dress neatly, and, when she can afford it, handsomely, but "dressy" girls fish with the wrong kind of bait. "The very recentmost agony is for a lady to have her photograph taken, full-length panel, and then after having elaborately dressed the picture in silks and laces, to send it to her best young man," reports the *Hartford Post*. "The true significance of this is not to be misunderstood by the average acute young man. It means, 'That's about the style I shall expect to dress.' Whereupon he goes and gets introduced to a more economical girl."

The right and the wrong sort of bait for a girl to use—she must not consciously use any—are incidentally described in a letter which Horace Bushnell wrote to his daughter. He thus enumerates the qualities which go to make up what he calls a fine woman :—

"A fine woman must be the very expression of modesty, and without the least affectation in her manners. Here, the best rule is always to feel beautifully, and she will act beautifully, of course ; whereas, if she undertakes to fashion her manners by rule, or to copy others, she will as surely be stiff and affected. As to her looks, she will look best if she is never conscious that she has any looks at all, provided only that she has enough

beauty and refinement of feeling to clothe her person out of it; for dress itself is never happy or becoming, if it is not the natural clothing of a lovely spirit."

Again :

"A fine woman does nothing to excite admiration, for that is the way to excite contempt, and, what is more, to deserve it. The woman who flatters, and fawns, and studies her methods to attract the admiration of others, seems to ask for it, and, in asking, to confess that it can be gotten only by means that are without the scale of merit."

A lady thus writes in the *Woman's World* :—

"I once knew a lady, a gentlewoman in every sense of the word, who always said, 'I want my daughters to be made good wives for poor gentlemen,' and she arranged her plans accordingly. Each of the Ladies C—— took her 'week' in due turn to go into the housekeeper's room, and be properly instructed in the mysteries of the still-room, pastry-making, and other domestic duties. Well, each of the Ladies C—— was duly presented, and each married in her first season, not a poor gentleman, but a rich nobleman. Their efficiency as housekeepers did not interfere with, or prove detrimental to their matrimonial prospects. *Au contraire*, I believe they were all the more sought after, and they have admirably-managed establishments."

This mother knew the kind of bait that catches the best fish.

Another example of the success of the same kind of bait is given by Lady Bellairs, who thus writes: "Three or four years ago, I was told of a country family, so circumstanced as to

render it expedient for them to break up temporarily their expensive establishment, and retrench considerably in their mode of living. It became a question of leaving, and endeavouring to sell or let, their comfortable ancestral home. But the daughters—seven in number, fine high-spirited girls—undismayed and equal to the occasion, petitioned to remain. Let all the domestics be discharged; they were ready to undertake all the household work,—and so it happened. Father, mother, and children co-operated with hearty goodwill. Retrenchment became the order of the day in all departments. Yet to outsiders and friends who visited them, the old house seemed as pleasant to stay at as before, and the young men, struck with admiration, voted the daughters the nicest and most sensible girls out. When I last inquired about them, five had already flown, having made excellent marriages. As that was some little time ago, probably the remaining two have ere this also ‘gone off’!”

A correspondent of an American paper has discovered as the result of his observations that the girls who are most successful in getting husbands are the girls who have learned to earn their own livelihood in useful employments. She gathers from this that the average young man of the period is a much more sensible creature than he is given credit for being. It is quite reasonable to suppose that a girl who has learned to work, and who has felt the responsibility arising from the sense of the necessity of working, is likely—other things being equal—to make a better mistress of a home than a girl, however charming, who has had nothing to do but look pretty all her life. Marriage is not all billing and cooing, as many brides-

expectant suppose it to be. The wife who can make herself most useful is she whose home is likely to be the happiest. Men are selfish creatures at bottom—every one of them. Edwin before marriage is ready to go through fire and water, and to endure any hardship, for his beloved Angelina ; but after marriage, should the dinner be a quarter of an hour late, or the joint be overdone or underdone, or any of the domestic wheels drag a little, Edwin will lay all the blame on Angelina. Let Angelina, therefore, before marriage learn how to keep all the wheels properly oiled.





CHAPTER XI.

HELPFUL WIVES.

"God help the bachelor! the housewife helps a husband. —*Russian Proverb.*



HAVING obtained as the reward of her charms and accomplishments and not by means unworthy of her, a suitable partner, a girl is in the fair way of becoming by the grace of God a helpful wife. For the encouragement of those who aspire to this title, which is, with the exception of "mother," the highest and noblest a woman can have, we give a few examples of helpful wives who are known to fame, but who could easily be matched by others whom every one can think of in the circle of his own acquaintances.

Old bachelor patient: "Doctor, I feel miserable in mind and body. What shall I take?" *Doctor* (gruffly): "Take a wife." Many are the men who have profited by taking this prescription. Before marriage they were worth little, after it

worth much. Man never appreciates his inferiority to woman so thoroughly as when he stands before the altar in the presence of an audience of friends, and hears the clergyman make him husband. Nine out of ten men in such a position tremble as if they were about to be arrested for murder, while nine out of ten women go through the ceremony as gracefully as if it were an every-day occurrence. And it is this timorous creature in a dress suit that promises to protect the calm and placid angel whose orange blossoms are her aureole. What delicious sarcasm there is in the thought ! And in after-life, when the husband gets torn up by care, and when a little trouble comes to steal away his peace of mind, how is it then ? The woman whom he promised to protect becomes his protector. She sees sunshine through the clouds. She smooths out the wrinkled brow of care. She props up his flagging spirits. She puts new life into his bosom, new hope into his soul, and he goes forth in the morning with new strength and new zeal to wrestle with life and its responsibilities. Women may be the weaker vessel, but she isn't broken up and doesn't go to pieces as soon as man.

Lady Rachel Russell is one of the many celebrated women who have encouraged their husbands to suffer and be strong. She sat beside her husband day after day during his public trial, taking notes and doing everything to help him. She laboured and pleaded for his release so long as she could do so with honour—so long that he himself said he wished she would cease “beating every bush” for his preservation. At last, when she saw that all was in vain, she collected her courage, and strove by her example to strengthen the reso-

lution of her lord. And when his last hour had nearly come, and his wife and children waited to receive his parting embrace, she, brave to the end, that she might not add to his distress, concealed the agony of her grief under a seeming composure ; and they parted, after a tender adieu, in silence. After she had gone, Lord William said, " Now the bitterness of death is passed ! "

Some of the greatest philosophical and religious thinkers would never have given their opinions to the world if it had not been for the sympathy and appreciation of their wives. This sort of service was rendered by the wife of Zimmermann, whose intense melancholy she strove in vain to assuage—sympathizing with him, listening to him, and endeavouring to understand him—and to whom, when on her death-bed, about to leave him, she addressed the touching words, " My poor Zimmermann ! who will now understand thee ? "

Wives have been eyes, hands, mind, and everything to their husbands.

The great authority on " Bees "—Huber, a Geneva naturalist—was blind from his seventeenth year, and yet he found means to master a branch of natural history demanding the closest observation and the keenest eyesight. It was through the eyes of his wife that his mind worked as if they had been his own. She encouraged her husband's studies as a means of alleviating his privation, which at length he came to forget.

Franklin used to say that " the man who would thrive must ask his [a] wife. " Of the same opinion was the hero of the following little story : A clergyman, travelling through the

village of Kettle, in Fifeshire, was called into an inn to officiate at a marriage, instead of the parish minister, who, from some accident, was unable to attend, and had caused the company to wait for a considerable time.

While the reverend gentleman was pronouncing the admonition, and just as he had told the bridegroom to love and honour his wife, the said bridegroom interjected the words, "and obey," which he thought had been omitted from oversight, though that is part of the rule laid down solely to the wife. The minister, surprised to find a husband willing to be henpecked by anticipation, did not take advantage of the proposed amendment ; on which the bridegroom again reminded him of the omission. "Ay, and obey, sir—love, honour, and obey, ye ken !" and he seemed seriously discomposed at finding that his hint was not taken.

Some years after the same clergyman was riding through the village, when the same man came out and stopped him, addressing him in the following remarkable words : "D'ye mind, sir, yon day, when ye married me, and when I wad insist upon vowing to obey my wife ? Weel, ye may now see that I was in the richt. Whether ye wad or no, I hae obeyed my wife ; and behold, I am now the only man that has a twa-storey house in the hale toun !"

"Oftentimes," says Oliver Wendell Holmes, in his "Professor at the Breakfast Table," "as I have lain swinging on the water in that long, sharp-pointed, black cradle, in which I love to let the great mother rock me, I have seen a tall ship glide by against the tide as if drawn by some invisible tow-line with a hundred strong arms pulling it ; her sails being unfilled,

her streamers were drooping, she had neither side-wheel nor stern-wheel ; still, she moved on stately in her serene triumph as if with her own life. But I knew that on the other side of the ship, hidden beneath the great hull that swam so majestically, there was a little toiling steam tug with heart of fire and arms of iron that was hugging it close and dragging it bravely on, and I knew that if the steam-tug untwined her arms and left the tall ship it would wallow and roll about and drift hither and thither, and go off with the reflux tide, no man knows whither.

“And so I have known more than one genius, high-decked, full-freighted, wide-sailed, gay-pennoned, that, but for the brave toiling arms and brave warm-beating heart of the faithful little wife that nestled close in his shadow, and clung to him so that no wind or wave could part them, and dragged him on against all the tide of circumstances, would soon have gone down the stream and been heard of no more.”

Some authors have freely acknowledged their indebtedness to their wives. Tom Hood had such confidence in his wife's judgment that he read and re-read and corrected with her all he wrote. Many of his articles were first dictated to her, and her ready memory supplied him with his references and quotations. Anthony Trollope said that no person but his wife had ever read a line of his manuscript, “to my very great advantage in matters of taste.”

The wives of many authors and journalists have been not only good copyists, but suggestive literary assistants. Mr. Sala lately gave expression to his grief at the loss of such a helpful wife. He declares himself a broken-hearted and

desolate old man. The novelist, Alphonse Daudet, had determined to remain a bachelor, because he was afraid that if he made a wrong step in marriage he might dull his imagination. He has given expression to this fear in the "*Femmes d'Artistes*," and more particularly in the tale "*Madame Heurtbise*," with which the volume opens. But, on being introduced to Mademoiselle Julie Allard, who loved literature, and was a charming writer and critic herself, his fear was removed. The union proved a very happy one, and the picture of the two at work is an attractive bit of biography. "She has been," says his brother, "the light of his hearth, the regulator of his work, and the discreet counsellor of his inspiration. There is not a page that she has not revised, retouched, and enlivened; and her husband has borne witness to her devotion and indefatigable collaboration in the dedication of '*Nabob*;' but she would not allow this dedication to appear."

Once it is related, he had a sentimental and dramatic scene with his wife, concerning which he remarked :

"This seems, my dear, like a chapter that has slipped out of a novel."

"It is more likely, Alphonse," was the reply, "to form a chapter that will slip into one."

The most noteworthy examples of joint authorship are those of Samuel Carter and Anne Maria Hall, and of William and Mary Howitt. Mr. and Mrs. Hall worked together for fifty-six years, and wrote not fewer than 340 volumes. Mrs. Howitt ably discharged her domestic duties. "My wife," boasted Mr. Howitt, "is the best poetess and the best housewife in England."

Wives like Mrs. Carlyle have assisted their husbands' work by keeping house so well that their indigestions and tempers were not unnecessarily disturbed. Hawthorne acknowledged that the inspiration which produced his imperishable contributions to American classics depended for its undisturbed flow on a serene and happy domestic environment which his wife alone could supply.

Robert J. Burdette, well known by his humorous contributions to the Burlington *Hawkeye*, and also as a lecturer, gives an account in *Lippincott* of the stimulus which he received from the invalid wife, lately deceased, of whom he tenderly says, at the close of the article, "Whatever of earnestness and high purpose there is in my life, I owe to the gentlest, best, and wisest of critics and collaborators, a loving, devoted wife." Concerning his work he says: "As Mrs. Burdette's health failed, I did more and more of my work at home, soon withdrawing entirely from desk-work in the *Hawkeye* office, and writing altogether at home. 'Her Little Serene Highness' was at this time quite helpless, suffering every moment, in every joint, rheumatic pain, acute and terrible. But in these years of her suffering helplessness, more than ever is visible her collaboration in my work. Each manuscript was read to her before it went to the paper. She added a thought here and there, suggested a change of word or phrase, and so tenderly that, in her trembling hand, the usually dreaded and remorseless 'blue pencil' became a wand of blessing, struck out entire sentences and pet paragraphs. How well she knew 'what not to print'! Blessed indeed is the man who writes with such a critic looking over his

shoulder, a wife who loves and prizes her husband's reputation far above his own vanity or recklessness !”

The thorough way in which some wives identify themselves in the pursuits of their husbands, is illustrated in the case of two American ladies. The engineer who was carrying on the works of the stupendous bridge which now connects New York with Brooklyn, became incapacitated, through illness, from further superintendence, while a great part of the work still remained unfinished. Thereupon his wife, who, in assisting her husband in making his plans and specifications, had already mastered all the details connected with the structure, at once took his place, and successfully completed the magnificent bridge, having, while daily overlooking the works, commanded the respect of contractors and workmen by the knowledge and ability she displayed in conducting the operations.

The other case is that of Mrs. Frank Leslie, who is, I believe, the only instance of a woman who presides at the head of a great publishing house, and who is alike both editor and manager. Her husband died more than six years ago, leaving her a business hopelessly involved. His dying words to her were, “Go to my office, sit in my place, and do my work until my debts are paid.” She worked night and day, living in a carpetless garret, and depriving herself of all the pleasures and luxuries of life until she established the great publishing house on a firmer basis than it had ever been before. “I lived,” she said, when doing so, “the life of a man without a man's enjoyments. She has been described as “the handsomest and most fascinating newspaper man in America.”

Carlyle used playfully to describe his wife as a "necessary evil," and indeed most men before they are long married find their wives so helpful that they are almost necessities. A wife's work is never done. Dinner to order, bedrooms to inspect, tradesmen to speak with, "things" to be looked after, before they go to and when they return from the laundry, children to teach, shopping, calls of society. To the majority of men, who have only on rare occasions to order their dinner beforehand, the duty is felt to be a bore; how much more, then, must it be for a woman who has, in ordinary housewifery, to look after every meal, and even, if she have a judiciously frugal mind, to weigh the meat before it is cooked? I have heard more than one lady remark that the greatest pleasure of hotel life, and of a visit to one's friends, is to be able to sit down to dinner without a knowledge of what is coming in the various courses.

A woman may have much theoretical knowledge, but this will not prevent unlooked-for obstacles from arising. Annoyances caused by human frailty and the working of natural agents beset every practical housekeeper. If for any reason the body has been deprived of its usual amount of sleep, it is well-nigh impossible to get up at the usual hour in the morning, and work with the same untiring energy which is easily put forth when all the physical functions are perfectly rested, and ready for the tasks imposed upon them. Yet a good housekeeper needs to be a prompt and energetic riser. A little extra sleep in the morning may easily throw an entire day's work awry. Vain, indeed, prove all attempts to "catch a moment by the tail and hold it fast," for the hours glide by regardless

of human wishes. Then, again, the dishonesty or carelessness of a servant may prove the source of untold annoyance. Or the housekeeper may be unable to guard against heat and cold, wind and the atmosphere, and other natural agencies, which are constantly producing effects upon her household economy.

To paterfamilias it seems as much a matter of course as that night succeeds day and day follows night that his meals should be served up in becoming rotation, and each with its proper complement of viands; that his servants should perform their offices deftly; that his children should not profanely break in upon his repose; that his chimneys should be swept before the soot has dangerously accumulated; and that, generally, his household machine should revolve easily, with its works well oiled and in the best of gear. But suppose he had not a helpful wife, how then?

We hear enough and to spare of the strikes and complaints of "working men," but there is one class of labourers who never strike and seldom complain. They get up at five o'clock in the morning and never go back to bed until ten or eleven o'clock at night. They work without ceasing the whole of that time, and receive no other emolument than food and the plainest clothing. They understand something of every branch of economy and labour, from finance to cooking. Though harassed by a hundred responsibilities, though driven and worried, though reproached and looked down upon, they never revolt; and they cannot organize for their own protection. Not even sickness releases them from their posts. No sacrifice is deemed too great for them to make, and no incompetency

in any branch of their work is excused. No essays or books or poems are written in tribute to their steadfastness. They die in harness, and are supplanted as quickly as may be. These are the housekeeping wives of the labouring men.





CHAPTER XII.

THE INFLUENCE OF A WIFE.

"Men will always be what women make them ; if, therefore, you would have men great and virtuous, impress upon the minds of women what greatness and virtue are."—*Rousseau*.

"No man ever lived a right life who had not been chastened by a woman's love, strengthened by her courage, and guided by her discretion."—*Ruskin*.



WE believe that the greatest help a wife can give to her husband is to induce him to do what is right. It is impossible to exaggerate the influence for good that women may have upon men. Even in this unromantic nineteenth century the following words of Mr. Ruskin are known by some of us to convey, not merely sentiment, but real and literal truth : "The soul's armour is never set to the heart unless a woman's hand has braced it ; and it is only when she braces it loosely that the honour of manhood fails." Again, in another

of his books the same writer says, "There is not a war in the world, no, nor an injustice, but you women are answerable for it ; not in that you have provoked, but in that you have not hindered. Men, by their nature, are prone to fight ; they will fight for any cause, or for none. It is for you to choose their cause for them, and to forbid them when there is no cause. There is no suffering, no injustice, no misery in the earth, but the guilt of it lies with you. Men can bear the sight of it, but you should not be able to bear it. Men may tread it down without sympathy in their own struggle ; but men are feeble in sympathy, and contracted in hope ; it is you only who can feel the depths of pain, and conceive the way of its healing." A bachelor was once saying, "Next to no wife, a good wife is best." He was one of those who hold by the old rhyme—

" Needles and pins, needles and pins,
When a man marries his trouble begins."

"You are quite mistaken," said one who overheard him ; "next to a good wife, no wife is best." Certainly, if a man's life is not fortunate enough to be influenced by a good wife, the next best thing for him is to escape the influence of a bad one. Most men are what women make them. "Even a bad man in love becomes better than his wont."

" O woman ! lovely woman ! nature made thee
To temper man ; we had been brutes without you."

And the species of brutes we had been is told us by a Provençal proverb: "Without woman men were but ill-licked cubs." What was said of the poet Campbell by a friend writing to Lady Mackintosh might have been said of a thousand other men :—

"I have seldom seen so strong an argument from experiment in favour of matrimony as the change it has effected in the general tone of his temper and manners."

A judicious wife is always nipping off from her husband's moral nature little twigs that are growing in the wrong direction. She keeps him in shape by pruning. If you say anything silly, she will affectionately style you so. If you declare that you will do some absurd thing, she will find some way of preventing you from doing it. A wife is a grand wielder of the moral pruning-knife. If Johnson's wife had lived, there would have been no hoarding up of orange-peel, no touching all the posts in walking along the street, no eating and drinking with disgusting velocity. If Oliver Goldsmith had been married he never would have worn that memorable and ridiculous coat. Whenever you find a man whom you know little about oddly dressed, talking absurdly, or exhibiting eccentricity of manner, you may be sure he is not a married man, for the corners are rounded off, the little shoots pared away, in married men. Wives have much more sense than their husbands. The wife's advice is like the ballast that keeps the ship steady.

"If thou would fully know what manners mean,
Then learn from noble women what they teach."

From the Journal of Lavater, the eminent physiognomist, and pastor in Zurich, Switzerland, we take the following extract, which shows the good effect of his wife's influence upon his temper :—

"*January 23, 1769.*—My servant asked me after dinner whether she should sweep my room. I said, 'Yes ; but you

must not touch my books or papers.' I did not speak with the mild accent of a good heart. A secret uneasiness and fear that it would occasion me vexation had taken possession of me. When she had gone some time, I said to my wife, 'I am afraid she will cause some confusion upstairs.' In a few minutes my wife, with the best intentions, stole out of the room and told the servant to be careful. 'Is my room not swept yet?' I exclaimed at the bottom of the stairs. Without waiting for an answer I ran up into my room. As I entered, the girl overturned an inkstand which was standing on the shelf. She was much terrified. I called out harshly, 'What a stupid creature you are! Have I not positively told you to be careful?' My wife slowly and timidly followed me upstairs. Instead of being ashamed, my anger broke out anew. I took no notice of her; and ran to the table lamenting and moaning, as if the most important writings had been spoiled, though in reality the ink had touched nothing but a blank sheet and some blotting-paper. The servant watched an opportunity to steal away, and my wife approached me with loving gentleness. 'My *dear* husband!' said she. I stared at her with vexation in my looks. She entranced me; I wanted to get out of her way. Her face rested on my cheek for a few moments. At last, with unspeakable tenderness, she said, 'You will hurt your health, my dear!' I now began to be ashamed. I was silent, and at last began to weep. 'What a miserable slave to my temper I am!' I said. 'I dare not lift up my eyes. I cannot rid myself of the dominion of that sinful passion.' My wife replied, 'Consider, my dear, how many days and weeks pass away without your being overcome by anger. Let

us pray together.' I knelt down beside her ; and she prayed so naturally, so fervently, and so much to the purpose, that I thanked God sincerely for that hour and for my wife."

Do we not all know dozens, if not hundreds, of cases, even among our own friends, where "the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife"? where the man who has been careless and irreligious is gradually brought into the right way by his wife?

"She never found fault with you ; never implied
Your wrong by her right ; and yet men by her side
Grew nobler ; girls purer, as through the whole town
The children were gladder that pulled at her gown."

But though a good wife does not nag and find fault, she is careful not to spoil her husband. Her motto is—

"I needs must disobey him for his good :
How should I dare obey him to his harm ?
Needs must I speak out, though he kill me for it."

"The wife," says Sir Henry Taylor, "who praises and persuades, warns and exhorts, upon occasion given, and carries her love all with a strong heart, and not a weak fondness—she is the true helpmate."

Women, with their stronger domestic instincts, understand and realize more perhaps than men do the necessity of having religion in family life ; but the laws of God are for husbands quite as much as for wives. When Sydney Smith preached in Edinburgh some forty years ago, seeing that the congregation was mostly composed of women, he preached from the text, "Oh that men would therefore praise the Lord." The more this wish of the Psalmist is realized, the more happiness there

will be in married life. Every wife, therefore, should try the effect of a home mission upon her husband.

“ Then kneeling down to Heaven's eternal King,
The saint, the father, and the husband prays ;
Hope ‘ springs exulting on triumphant wing,’
That thus they all shall meet in future days ;
There ever be in uncreated rays,
No more to sigh or shed the bitter tear,
Together hymning their Creator's praise,
In such society, yet still more dear,
While circling time moves round in an eternal sphere.”

The home ministry of Monica, the mother of St. Augustine was blessed by the conversion of her husband as well as by that of her celebrated son. The family peace was continually disturbed by his irritable disposition, but never would Monica return his rough words, nor complain of him to others, but gently she would wait until the angry fit had passed, and then try to explain what had vexed him, so that they never had any difference for one day. He was won by her sweetness and gentleness to be gentle to her, and to love and honour her dearly, and at last was brought to a pure and Christian life, and dwelt in faith and peace. Thus Monica was the means of saving her husband, and other women may do likewise.

Many are the men who have come under the influence of a good woman, and who can say with heartfelt gratitude—

“ Lady, since I conceived
Thy pleasurable aspect in my heart,
My life has been apart
In shining brightness and the place of truth ;
Which all that time, good sooth,

Groped among shadows in a darken'd place,
Where many hours and days
It hardly ever had remember'd good.
But now my servitude
Is thine, and I am full of joy and rest.
A man from a wild beast
Thou madest me, since for thy love I live."

We could, alas ! enumerate cases where a wife's influence has been on the wrong side, where bad women have done all in their power to drag down the moral natures of their husbands.

The second wife of Sir Thomas More did all in her power to lower her husband to her own level. When More seemed slow to make the most of himself to the world, the ambitious wife used to exclaim, "Tillie vallie ! Tillie vallie ! will you sit and make goslings in the ashes ? My mother hath often said unto me, it is better to rule than be ruled." To which familiar expostulation More's usual reply, muttered in the mildest of humorous voices, was, "Now, in truth, that is truly said, good wife ; for I never found you yet willing to be ruled."

More could never make her accept or even comprehend the principles that were to him the first elements of social morality. She could not understand that people should act less for their own happiness than the happiness of others, that nothing could contribute more than universal sincerity to the happiness of others, and that, therefore, a good man's first duty to others lay in punctilious truthfulness to himself. No woman to encourage her husband to pursue the martyr's path and win the martyr's crown. She scolded him in the Tower

after this fashion : " I marvel that you, who have hitherto been always taken for a wise man, will now so play the fool as to lie here in this close, filthy prison . . . when you might be abroad at your liberty, with the favour and goodwill both of the king and his council, if you would but do as the bishops and best learned of this realm have done ; and, seeing you have at Chelsea a right fair house, . . . where you might, in company with me, your wife, your children, and household, be merry, I muse what, in God's name, you mean here thus fondly to tarry."

This instance of a husband set on dying for what he deemed the truth, and his wife rating him for being a fool, furnishes an illustration of a fact which, in matters of less importance, may be seen every day, that some wives try to exercise an evil and not a good influence over their husbands.

As women have the power,

" Not only to keep down the base in man,
But teach high thought and amiable words,
And courtliness, and the desire of fame,
And love of truth, and all that makes a man,"

so they have the power to degrade and lower them far more than men can degrade and lower each other. Theodota boasted to Socrates that she was able to draw off his disciples to herself. " That may well be," said the sage, " for you lead them down an easy descent ; whereas I am for forcing them to mount to virtue—an arduous ascent, and unknown to most men."

Of course it is scarcely possible for a wife to greatly influence her husband if he has ceased to love her. So the wisest thing she can do is to strive to retain his love with as much care as

she tried to win it in courting days. Some of the following advice, which is given with much diffidence, might, if followed, help her to do this. It is true that husbands require advice perhaps even more than wives, and that it requires two to make a happy home, but it would be absurd to address husbands in a book written for girls and women. To you, then, Mrs. Wife, and not to your husband, I direct my remarks.

And first be as kind and courteous to your husband as you were when he was your lover. Then you used to look up to him; do not now look down upon him. Be as unlike as possible to those vain wives who seek for the admiration of and try to please every man except the unfortunates who are married to them.

Remember that you are married to a man and not to a god; be prepared for imperfections.

Once in a while let your husband have the last word; it will gratify him and be no particular loss to you.

Let him know more than you do once in a while; it keeps up his self-respect, and you are none the worse for admitting that you are not actually infallible.

Be reasonable; it is a great deal to ask under some circumstances, but do try; reasonable women are rare—be rare.

Read something in the papers beside fashion notes and society columns; have some knowledge of what is going on in foreign countries.

Be a companion to your husband if he is a wise man; and if he is not, try to make him become your companion. Raise his standard, do not let him lower yours.

Try and forget yourself; as to your husband, forget that you

married him, and remember that he married you ; he will then probably do the reverse.

Even if your husband have no heart, he is sure to have a stomach, so be careful to lubricate the marriage yoke with well-cooked dinners.

Don't be always teasing him for money, and keep the household expenses well within your allowance.

Respect your husband's relations, especially his mother—she is none the less his mother because she is your mother-in-law ; she loved him before you did.





CHAPTER XIII.

ABOUT MOTHERS.

“—— I feel that, in the heavens above,
The angels, wh’ispering to one another,
Can find, among their burning words of love,
None so devotional as that of ‘mother.’”

Edgar Allan Poe.

“The mother only educates humanely. . . . Men govern and earn the glory ; and the thousand watchful nights and sacrifices by which a mother purchases a hero or a poet for the state, are forgotten—not once counted ; for the mothers themselves do not count them ; and so, one century after another, do mothers, unnamed and unthanked, send forth the arrows, the suns, the storm-birds, and the nightingales of time.”—*Richter.*



IS there any work done by men so useful as that which is done by a good mother ? The work of the Prime Minister or chief servant of England is no doubt very great, but it may be that the best mother of England, whoever she is, serves her country even more. One good mother is worth a hundred schoolmasters. She influences far more than does the father

the action and conduct of the child. When people grow up and get fixed habits, clergymen can do comparatively little to reform them, but a mother can harden in goodness the pliable character of her child. Thus it is that posterity may be said to lie in the person of the child in the mother's lap.

In reading the biographies of great men we are often struck by the love they had for their mothers, to whom they attributed all their greatness. Buffon, the great French naturalist, used to say that he took after his mother. He held that children usually inherit intellectual and moral qualities from their mother. Napoleon I. said that he principally owed his subsequent elevation to the manner in which his mother formed him at an early age. His opinion was that the future good or bad conduct of a child entirely depended upon the mother.

Watt, the great civil engineer, was undoubtedly immensely indebted to his mother, who was a superior woman, described by one who knew her as "a braw, braw woman—none now to be seen like her." Watt, being of delicate health, passed his early years almost entirely with his mother, whose gentle nature, strong good sense, and unobtrusive piety, exercised a most beneficial influence on the formation of his character, and receiving, as he did, from her his first lessons in knowledge, she certainly influenced the physiognomy of his plastic mind.

Cuvier, the great geologist, is another instance of a mother's influence over her son. He was not only taught to read by her, but she learnt Latin in order to assist him in his later studies, and had the satisfaction of finding that he was always the best grounded boy in the school he attended. She also laid the foundation of drawing and literature in his mind, and

so helped him in all his studies that he attributed a great portion of the success he achieved to her efforts.

De Maistre described his "sublime mother" as "an angel to whom God had lent a body for a brief season." He said that her noble character made all other women venerable in his eyes.

"Happy he

With such a mother ! Faith in womankind
Beats with his blood, and trust in all things high
Comes easy to him, and though he trip and fall,
He shall not blind his soul with clay."

George Washington was only eleven years of age—the eldest of five children—when his father died. The widowed mother had her children to educate and bring up, a large household to govern, and extensive estates to manage, all of which she accomplished with complete success. Her good sense, tenderness, industry, and vigilance enabled her to overcome every obstacle ; and, as the richest reward of her solicitude and toil, she had the happiness to see all her children come forward with a fair promise into life, filling the places allotted to them in a manner equally honourable to themselves, and to the parent who had been the only guide of their principles, conduct, and habits. Mrs. Washington used daily to gather her little flock around her to read to them lessons of Christian religion and morality, and her little manual in which she wrote the maxims which guided her was preserved by her son, and consulted by him as among his most precious treasures.

A mother's love is always a sacred instinct, but for it to become the strength and blessing it may be to the children, the mother herself must have a strong, holy, and well

disciplined character, like that of the mother of the Wesleys. She was very beautiful, and was married at nineteen to a country clergyman. She bore him nineteen children. To the end of her long life her sons, especially John, looked up to her and consulted her as the best friend and wisest counsellor they could have. The home over which Mrs. Wesley ruled was free and happy, and full of healthful play as any home in the holidays, and yet orderly and full of healthful work as any school. The "odious noise" of the crying of children was not suffered, but there was no restraint on their gleeful laughter. She had many wise rules, which she kept to steadily. One of these was to converse alone with one of her little ones every evening, listening to their childish confessions, and giving counsel in their childish perplexities. On the other hand, Nero's mother was a murderess. Nero was a murderer, on a gigantic scale. Byron's mother was proud, ill-tempered, and violent. Byron was proud, ill-tempered, and violent.

"I try so hard to make my children happy!" said a mother, with a sigh, one day, in despair at her efforts. "Stop trying," exclaimed a practical friend at her elbow, "and do as a neighbour of mine does." "And how is that?" she asked, dolefully. "Why, she simply lets her children grow and develop naturally, only directing their growth properly. She has always thrown them, as far as practicable, upon their own resources, taught them to wait upon themselves, no matter how many servants she had, and to construct their own playthings. When she returns home from an absence, they await but one thing—their mother's kiss. Whatever has been bought for them is bestowed

when the needed time comes. Nothing exciting is allowed to them at night, and they go to bed and to sleep in a wholesome mental state, that insures restful slumber. They are taught to love nature, and to feel that there is nothing arrayed so finely as the li'y of the field, the bees, and the butterflies, that there is nothing so mean as a lie, nor anything so miserable as disobedience, that it is a disgrace to be sick, and that good health, good teeth, and good temper come from plain food, plenty of sleep, and being good." Supreme faith in the mother, few toys, no finery, plain food, no drugs, and early to bed are the best things for making them happy.

There is such a thing as judicious neglect in the care of children. By this I mean a careful carelessness which allows them to look out for themselves as far as they safely can, but yet is always ready to step in at just the right moment. To be sure, their clothes will get soiled and their heads bumped oftener, but they will grow up more sturdy and self-reliant than where they are constantly watched.

In order to thrive, children require a certain amount of "letting alone." As it is a mistake to govern too much, so it is to try to *mould* our children into a certain fixed pattern, which shall be as nearly as possible the repetition of ourselves. Many a mother is disappointed because her daughter or her son, but especially the former, evinces tastes with which she has nothing in common. They display propensities which are perhaps not evil, but incongruous ; and then she commits the fatal error of trying to repress all that she dislikes or fails to comprehend.

Nothing that a child naturally displays as the bent of his

disposition should be actually repressed—save revenge, lying, want of honour, and some other flagrant derelictions from the paths of virtue; and even these need caution in repression. Even early vices sometimes indicate the presence of superior gifts. A childish habit of lying often foreshadows a fine poetic and creative genius, and the dogged obstinacy that tries the patience of the parent is but the germ of a courage and a firmness which, in after years, shall make the child a giant among men—a leader of his fellows. Our children's gifts too frequently become their curses; and it is chiefly, though not entirely the fault of the *unwise mothers*, who, either admiring too partially, or over-appreciating the gift, let it run riot; or else, disliking it, try to crush it out by main force.

Many of our loveliest garden flowers and exotics are derived, by sedulous care and skill, from what are generally called *weeds*. And may not the wise mother vie with the horticulturist in the treatment of the human plant committed to her care? May she not, by a judicious treatment, change obstinacy into firmness, impudence into frankness, self-complacency into self-reliance, weakness into gentleness, levity into cheerfulness, undue sensitiveness into tenderness for others, and sullen taciturnity into thoughtful silence?

A mother who indulges herself in "moods" is a most unwise mother. She sees the little world of her own household through rose-coloured spectacles one day, and regards it through smoked glass to-morrow. The miserable condition of a household of children who were under the influence of these "moods" has been thus described: "They were never sure whether the mother would be reasonable or unreasonable; they were never

quite certain what was permitted, and what would be resented as a liberty; they could not tell whether their work would be accepted or tossed away with scorn. Maternal criticism was to them a lottery: they might draw either praise or blame, according to the maternal state of mind; and the eldest son, a youth in his teens, returning home each evening from business, would regularly inquire of the eldest daughter, 'How is the temper?' and the answers, always truthfully given, varied from each other as widely as the midsummer sunshine varies from the black November fogs." Happy the children who are certain of justice! They can afford to dispense with many indulgences if they are sure of impartial praise and blame. They can even endure some unnecessary restraints if they know certainly what will merit displeasure and what will meet with condemnation.

It is difficult, I know, to strugg'e with that tyrant "*mood*!" When one feels depressed, or nervous, or disappointed—for the dark shadow rests upon us all sometimes—and when things go wrong—perversely wrong, as it would seem—it is no easy task not to visit our own state of gloom upon those who are expected to obey us, and so make everybody miserable, to match our own condition. But this is cruel treatment of the young. It injures them past calculation. It makes them timid, and of timidity comes cowardice, and of cowardice falsehood, and falsehood opens wide the door for a troop of sins and evils we need not specify.

We quote the following words of wise counsel to mothers from an American publication:—

"Teach the children to respect you. Perhaps you smile at

this. Love seems so far above and beyond respect ! The children love you with all their hearts. Granted. But for all this, neglect not to cultivate respect in them. A devoted mother is willing to forego comfort for the sake of her loved ones. Sleepless nights and aching limbs must sometimes be; but there is another kind of self-denial for mothers. When Marion has devoured her own portion of the choice fruit or confection, and her baby fingers stretch towards mamma's plate, deny yourself the pleasure of giving her the whole or a portion of what belongs to you.

"When Isabel longs for a new hat which she does not really need, and the family purse reminds you that you cannot purchase that without wearing your old cloak another winter, buy the new cloak, and let the hat wait. It may be there is an instructive course of lectures in progress. For some reason all the family cannot attend. Take your turn with the others. You will be surprised to see how willingly the girls or husband will remain at home when they find 'mother' cares about going. Do not say, 'Anything will do for me.' Have a proper care for your person and apparel.

"Encourage the children to work. Something more than encouragement may sometimes be necessary. In most cases, however, a judicious mother can so interest the boys and girls that work will not be a heavy burden. Marion wants to wash dishes, but is too small. Let her dust, while Isabel does the dishes, and by and by instruct them both in the mysteries of bed-making and bread-making. Be sure that the boys chop the wood and bring the water. No doubt it would be easier to do all this work yourself, there's so much 'bother' about

teaching children, but for their sakes, if not for your own, give the extra time and labour.

“All this may require self-denial on the part of the loving mother, who would gladly give herself and her possessions for the dear ones; still, in kindness to them, as well as to herself, these simple rules should be followed. When each child has his or her allotted portion of work, and mother is treated with the respect that is her due, there may be fewer sickly attempts at art, and fewer wishy-washy stories and poems written. There certainly would be fewer poor, tired women longing for rest; but mother, instead of being the slave and drudge, to be thrust into the background when company comes, will become what God designed her to be, the queen of the home.”

Mr. Ruskin thus answers the often asked question, “When does the education of a child begin?” “At six months old it can answer smile with smile, and impatience with impatience. It can observe, enjoy, and suffer acutely, and in a measure intelligently. Do you suppose it makes no difference to it that the order of the house is perfect and quiet, the faces of its father and mother full of peace, their soft voices familiar to its ear, and even those of strangers loving; or that it is tossed from arm to arm, among hard, or reckless, or vain-minded persons, in the gloom of a vicious household, or the confusion of a gay one? The moral disposition is, I doubt not, greatly determined in those first speechless years.”

To this question, “At what age would you educate a child?” another wise man answered—“Twenty years before its birth, by educating its father and mother.” As a general rule,

perhaps, more is done, or neglected to be done, in moulding a child's character in the first four years of life than in all his years of education afterwards.

“Ere your boy has reached to seven,
Teach him well the way to heaven ;
Better still the work will thrive,
If he learns before he's five.”

We must learn and practise ourselves what we want our children to learn and practise. Some of us may have smiled sadly at the account of the poor young mother, who wondered why her baby should be such a starveling, “when we give it a little of whatever we take ourselves—some red herring, a bit of cheese, a sup of beer,” but too many of us administer mental and moral diet quite as inappropriate. The number of babies born annually into the world is about 43,000,000; daily, 117,808; per minute, 80. It is sad to reflect how many of these helpless little ones, who never asked to be born, are dragged up anyhow rather than brought up as immortal beings should be.

Above all, we should be truthful with our children. The popular practice of teaching them to *seem* instead of to *be*, and of cultivating “company manners,” destroys the frankness and transparent candour which constitute the great charm of childhood. Never promise your child anything, either a bun or a beating, without giving it. On one occasion Dr. Johnson said to a friend, “‘Accustom your children constantly to tell the truth without varying in any circumstance.’” A lady who was present exclaimed, ‘Nay, this is too much; for a little variation in narrative must happen a thousand times a day if one is not per-

petually watching.' 'Well, madam,' replied the doctor, 'and you ought to be perpetually watching. It is more from carelessness about truth than from intentional lying that there is so much falsehood in the world.'"

It is very wrong for a mother to put all the disagreeable duty of correcting children upon the father and reserve all the petting to herself. If she act the part of a guardian angel, to whom the children can run when reprimanded by their father, this selfishness does those whom she professes to love great injury. The children come to regard their father as a family bugbear, whereas what he does contrary to the wishes of the child may be for its permanent good, and show far more real love than the weak indulgence of its mother. Nothing is worse for a child than divided counsels as between father and mother. If there must be punishment, it should be inflicted after joint consultation and prayerful deliberation. We quote the following from the biography of Father Bourke, who was celebrated in Ireland and America for his great oratorical powers:—

"Despite his asceticism, his vigils, and flagellations, his humour at times is more daring than that in which an orthodox Puritan pastor would permit himself to indulge. He was an uncommonly mischievous boy. Once before chastising him his mother entered her room, shut the door, and repeated the prayer beginning 'Direct, O Lord, our actions, and carry them on by Thy gracious assistance,' &c. 'When I saw my mother enter the room,' said Father Bourke, as he told the story, 'make the sign of the Cross, and solemnly invoke the light of the Holy Ghost to direct her, I knew I could expect no

mercy ; I never got such a beating as that one directed by the Holy Spirit, and I have never forgotten it."

This mother was quite right, for innocence and childhood are sacred, and those who correct a child for his good or cast into his heart the seed of instruction are accomplishing a pontifical act, and ought to perform it with religious awe, with prayer and gravity, for they are labouring at the kingdom of God. Mothers who think of nothing higher than the bodily ease and comfort of their children should reflect on the following words of Channing :—

"The birth of a child is one of the most important events in the Universe. All other things are created to perish. The oak grows from the acorn to live many years; but it will decay. The monuments may survive centuries, but will moulder. Even the sun will fade. But the soul will live, and will make everlasting progress. You would shudder at the thought of mutilating your children, of wounding them, feeding them with poisonous herbs, exposing them to contagion; but there is something worse than all these. No wounds are like those of the soul."

"A life that's full
Of little cares
And doubts and fears
No other shares;
And yet a life
That's glad with good—
The strong, pure joy
Of motherhood.

A bright blue sky
Of happiness,
Clouded at times,
Or more or less;

A life that's full
Of power for good—
This is the life
Of motherhood."

The duties of a good mother, working, perhaps, against wind and tide, with feeble health, or limited means, or possibly with a husband who thwarts and opposes her endeavours—these duties are, no doubt, very difficult ; but she shall not lose her reward.





CHAPTER XIV.

PETS OR PESTS: WHICH SHALL THEY BE?

"Bring thy children up in learning and obedience, yet without outward austerity. Praise them openly, reprehend them secretly. Give them good countenance and convenient maintenance according to thy ability, otherwise thy life will seem their bondage, and what portion thou shalt leave them at thy death, they will thank death for it and not thee. And I am persuaded that the foolish cockering of some parents, and the over-stern carriage of others, causeth more men and women to take ill courses than their own vicious inclinations."—*Lord Burleigh*.

"Train up a child in the way you should have gone yourself."—*Spurgeon*.



IN the last chapter we spoke of some of the difficult duties of a mother, yet there is no work so well rewarded as that which she undergoes for her children. If children receive much from parents, they bestow far more in return. We want life, noise, movement; we, the passing generation, want contact with the one that is rising up. We have too few

illusions; children have all theirs. We are inclined to be suspicious and therefore unjust; they accept the good as it appears, and for this very reason are often much nearer the truth than we. We often judge of things under the influence of a morose and irritated spirit; repeated disappointments have made us less hopeful than formerly. With young people it is very different. They doubt not the power of truth, they have faith in justice; they are generously devoted and confident, they have all the pleasures of hope, and they count upon success.

In this way we that consider ourselves strong men sometimes receive quite as much support from our children as we give to them. "What the women leave unfinished in our moral education," says Goethe, "the children complete in us;" and I believe, with Oliver Wendell Holmes, that many of the noblest and most beautiful traits of a man's character are left undeveloped and unperfected, until he knows what it is to have a little child look up in his face and say, "Father." If this be true of a man it is even more true of a woman. She is undeveloped and unperfected, until she knows what it is to have a little child look up in her face and say, "Mother."

Children "are the poetry of the world, beams of light, fountains of love, fresh flowers of our hearths and homes." They are the salt of the earth, without which it would have no savour.

"If childhood were not in the world,
But only men and women grown;
No baby locks in tendrils curled,
No baby blossoms blown;

Though men were stronger, women fairer,
And nearer all delights in reach,
And verse and music uttered rarer
Tones of more godlike speech ;

Though the utmost life of life's best hours
Found, as it cannot now find, words ;
Though desert sands were sweet as flowers,
And flowers could sing like birds ;

But children never heard them, never
They felt a child's foot leap and run ;
This were a drearier star than ever
Yet looked upon the sun."

Children are "incarnations of the smile of God," and ought to be revered as such, and also because there is in all of them, not excepting the ragged urchin who turns a wheel for a halfpenny, a potentiality of goodness and greatness. One day we may be glad to salute that ragged little street boy.

Mothers will be interested in the following list of things a baby can do. Doubtless every mother could add many items to it : "A baby can beat any alarm clock ever invented, waking a family up in the morning.

"Give it a chance and it can smash more dishes than the most industrious servant-girl in the country.

"It can fall down oftener and with less provocation than the most expert tumbler in the circus ring.

"It can make more genuine fuss over a simple brass pin than its mother would over a broken back.

"It can choke itself black in the face with greater ease than he most accomplished wretch that ever was executed.

"It can keep a family in a constant turmoil from morning

till night and from night till morning without once varying its tune.

"It can be relied upon to sleep peacefully all day when its father is away at business and cry persistently at night when he is particularly sleepy.

"It may be the naughtiest, dirtiest, ugliest, most fretful baby in all the world, but you can never make its mother believe it, and you had better not try.

"It can be a charming and model infant when no one is around, but when visitors are present it can exhibit more bad temper than both of its parents together.

"It can brighten up a house better than all the furniture ever made; make sweeter music than the finest orchestra organized; fill a larger place in its parents' breast than they knew they had, and when it goes away it can cause a greater vacancy and leave a greater blank than all the rest of the world put together."

"Oh, there's nothing," says Mr. Ludlow, "like the simple, cheap luxury of pleasing a child, to create sunshine enough for the chasing away of the bluest adult devils." Finding from experience that this is the case, we pet and make much of our children, wisely or unwisely. If a suspicion arise in our minds that we may be spoiling them, we silence it by reflecting that they will not long remain children, or, worse still, that death may rob them from us. Let them be happy, while the evil days come not why should I torment them? Is there any thoughtful, loving parent who has not at some time felt feelings like those attributed to Mr. Churchill in Longfellow's story of "Kavanagh"?

"Good-night, Alfred!"

His father looked fondly after him as he went upstairs holding Lucy by one hand, and with the other rubbing the sleep out of his eyes.

"Ah! these children, these children!" said Mr. Churchill, as he sat down at the tea-table; "we ought to love them very much now, for we shall not have them long with us!"

"Good heavens!" exclaimed his wife, "what do you mean? Does anything ail them? Are they going to die?"

"I hope not. But they are going to grow up, and be no longer children."

"Oh, you foolish man! You gave me such a fright!"

"And yet it seems impossible that they should ever grow to be men, and drag the heavy artillery along the dusty road of life."

But pets may and will develop into pests if we love them, not too well—which is impossible—but unwisely. Children are what they are made; the pity is that so many are spoiled in the bringing up.

"I fear, if you go to the country," wrote Carlyle's mother to him, "we will not get so many of your good epistles; they do me a great deal of good in comforting me in my old age; it is like reaping my harvest." Parents reap a harvest of comfort in their old age when they have sown good seed in the hearts of their children, and of woe if they have cast in the opposite kind of seed.

A child's first lesson should be obedience, and after that you may teach it what you please: yet the young mind must not be laced too tight, or you may hurt its growth and hinder its

strength. Nobody needs so much common sense as a mother or a governess. It does not do to be always thwarting; and yet remember "if you give a child his will and a whelp his fill, both will surely turn out ill." A child's back must be made to bend, but it must not be broken. He must be ruled, but not with a rod of iron. His spirit must be conquered, but not crushed. There are the two extremes to be avoided. On the one hand there is extravagant indulgence, vitiating the character almost before it has had time to show the first spring flowers of its native innocence; on the other, austerity, ill-nature, and gloom, making all the May of life a November, checking the growth of the affections, and introducing distrust and fear where as yet unsuspecting confidence should reign. She is a good mother who can steer between these two extremes.

To itself, quite as much as to others, the child that is spoiled becomes a pest. It goes out into the world with no moral fibre to wrestle with circumstances. It is enervated and emasculated, at the mercy of everybody and of every chance, yet with a disposition which tends to arouse antagonism and to repel friendly help and counsel. There is nothing more sad to witness than the mistaken kindness which not only produces such results, but generally defeats its own aim of securing affection for itself. If the short-sighted kindness of a foolishly fond mother urges her to do everything for her child, and to smooth away every obstacle in his path, she is causing him to miss the training that is derived from doing for ourselves difficult duties.

I knew, for a year or two, a soldier who was continually

coming to the military hospital suffering from sickness induced by drinking habits. On being discharged as unfit for the service, he told me how it was that he first acquired the desire for drink. It was, he said, all owing to the fact that his father, who was a very rich indigo planter, used to allow him, when a boy at school, too much pocket-money. This led him to drinking and gambling. Nobody can realize, without actual experience, how many young men are encouraged in extravagant, ruinous habits by means of money secretly forwarded by their mothers, without the knowledge and often against the express commands of their wiser guardians. This is the way to make children grow up to be pests to themselves and to society.

The worst injury any can inflict on society is to pet and spoil their children in such a way that when they grow up the world will regret that they did not die in infancy. A mother allows her boy to "answer her back," and treat her rudely. Years after she has gone to her account another person will reap the bitter harvest of her weakness. The spoiled son will have taken to himself a wife, whom he treats in the same rude manner that he was permitted to adopt towards his mother. A spoiled boy may possibly become a worthy, religious man, but the effect of his having been spoiled will be seen in the large amount of dross that will overlie the gold. He will be ill-mannered, over-bearing, selfish, and generally disagreeable. Mothers ! you can prevent this. When a boy is given to you accept him, not as a plaything merely, but as a most sacred trust—a talent to be put to the best account. Train him to be pure, truthful, unselfish, independent. Teach him to hate cruelty, to take the part of the weak, to recognize the special

gentleness and respectful consideration due to a woman, particularly to his mother and sisters. In this way you may, by the grace of God, prevent your pets from ever becoming pests.

Says a writer in the *Sunday at Home*.—

“We know one on whose mind it is very strongly impressed that life is never really peaceful, nor the soul of man thoroughly free, until, while accepting all lawful enjoyments and indulgences, it holds them in readiness to lay them down at the first call of duty. It is her best delight to study how to give pleasure to the young things about her, and it is her problem how to reconcile this with her desire to train them hardily for this duty of ready detachment. We have seen her unexpectedly send one of them a cup of tea minus the sugar, and noticed her watch for the comprehending smile of the recipient! It seemed a little thing, but possibly it may stand for much in the future. To know how to give up in silence, and with a smile, is one of the greatest lessons of life.”

Children never love any one the less for the administration of a just discipline. They feel that they have a right to it, and that it is not well for them to be let alone to do as they like. That is a weak and unworthy love which will not inculcate self-control, or train the power of self-denial; which refuses to see faults until they grow into vices, and then shuts its eyes to the vices; which caresses callousness and unworthiness because it gives it selfish pleasure to do so.

Two young ladies in one of the Southern States of America were standing by the side of a deep ditch, wondering how they were to cross it. They appealed to a boy, who was coming along

the road, for help, whereupon he pointed behind them with a startled air and yelled "Snakes." The ladies were over in a second. To resist the unruly will and affections of her darling boy may seem to a mother more difficult than crossing the deepest ditch, but she will be strengthened to do so by taking a survey of the troubles that will pursue both herself and her son if the duty be neglected. "How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is to have a thankless child!" and thankless he naturally will be, having nothing to thank her for, if she spoil him. He will discover by bitter experience that there is no cruelty to a child greater than the cruelty of spoiling it.

As years pass on the unwise mother either frets over the alienation of her children, or mourns that they have "turned out so ill." She remembers how she nursed them, how she toiled for them, how she prayed for them; perhaps, at the last, it dawned upon her wearied, saddened mind, that she was *unwise*! But the wise mother reaps the precious fruit of her labours. Her daughters become her companions and friends; her sons grow up to be her stay and her comfort; their reverence for her is equal to their love, and they, becoming in their turn parents, remember the lessons of their youth.

Tommy (who had just received a severe scolding): "Am I really so bad, Mamma?" *Mamma*: "Yes, Tommy, you are a very bad boy." *Tommy* (reflectively): "Well, anyway, Mamma, I think you ought to be real glad I'm not twins." (One child, if spoiled, is a misery to himself and to every one else, not to speak of twins.)



CHAPTER XV.

BUNCH.

"Are they servants? nay, they are members of the same household. Are they servants? nay, rather, humble friends if not fellow-servants, if thou thinkest that fortune hath as much power over thee as over them."—*Seneca.*

"'Not with eye-service as men-pleasers, but as servants of Christ doing the will of God from the heart.' Bear this in mind, all ye that are or will be servants. Do not despise it, do not think it beneath you. The service of men, as the apostle thus tells you, may indeed be in the fullest sense the service of Christ."—*Dean Stanley.*



PEAKING of his domestic arrangements when he became the rector of a country parish, Sydney Smith said: "A man-servant was too expensive; so I caught up a little garden-girl, made like a milestone, put a napkin in her hand, christened her Bunch, and made her my butler. The girls taught her to read, Mrs. Sydney to wait, and I undertook her morals. Bunch became the best butler in the county." If

servants are not what they used to be, and the race of Bunch has disappeared, may it not be because employers are not what they used to be, and do not take as much trouble with the training of their servants as was taken by Sydney Smith, his wife, and daughters? These sensible people wanted a good servant, so they set about making one, and Bunch was the by no means despicable result.

If we give the servant difficulty a little unprejudiced consideration, most of us will come to Mr. Ruskin's conclusion: that the only way to have good servants is to be worthy of being well served. "All nature and all humanity will serve a good master, and rebel against an ignoble one. And there is no surer test of the quality of a nation than the quality of its servants, for they are their masters' shadows, and distort their faults in a flattened mimicry. A wise nation will have philosophers in its servants' hall; a knavish nation will have knaves there."

In the training of Bunch, her master and each member of his family took an interest and had a share. The girls taught her to read. As a rule, there is too little of this mutual help and sympathy between the young ladies of a house and the young servant-girls. Too often the former look upon the latter as beings of different flesh and blood from themselves. They do not teach them anything improving; but only, by their example, to dress extravagantly and with bad taste, to be fast and rude in manner, to be selfish, indolent, and often irreligious.

Mrs. Sydney Smith taught Bunch to wait at table, but mistresses nowadays are too fine, too indolent, or too ignorant

to teach their servants this or any other domestic accomplishment. It is often advocated that training-schools should be established for domestic servants; but improvement must begin at the head. If we are to have training-schools for domestic servants, the servants may very well say there ought to be a training-school for mistresses. To rule well is even more difficult than to serve well. Every woman who has a house to govern should know what the duties are of every one she employs, how to do them, and when to do them. Unless she does, she will never be really mistress of her own house. "Knowledge is power" in this case, as in every other; and the servant who really does know her work very soon detects whether her mistress has any knowledge of the same or not, and becomes mistress of the situation in a very literal manner where she finds that her nominal mistress is ignorant.

Mistress (to applicant for cook's position): "Why did you leave your last place?" *Applicant*: "You're very inquisitive, marm. I did not ask you what for your last cook left you." This sort of thing is no doubt very disagreeable to employers, but they must now acquiesce in the inevitable fact that servants are no longer machines, and that they expect to find in their masters and mistresses the same moral qualities which masters and mistresses seek for in them.

Sydney Smith himself looked after the morals of Bunch. Certainly, the head of a house is its natural priest, but he must do more for the religion and morals of those whom he employs than merely read or say prayers to them, and give them opportunity to attend public worship. A little real interest in and sympathy with the recreation, friendships, and perhaps homely

tragedy of a servant's life will do more for her morals than acres of lectures and tons of sermons—sermons generally are heavy. But if religion and morality are not taught merely by catechisms and formal acts of worship, then it is the example of each member of a family that makes or mars the morals of such an one as Bunch. She will copy everything the young ladies do, and a word of encouragement from them will be much appreciated. If they rise early, so will she; if they show a pattern of order, neatness, and cleanliness, so will she; if they are conscientious in reference to little things, so will she be. Young ladies are not aware how much their dress and manners form the dress and manners of the servants' hall and kitchen; and that there is no truer saying than that servants grow like their mistresses. They should, therefore, endeavour to show any girls of a lower social rank than their own what is the meaning of modest grace, of Christian womanliness. They should seek to make them feel that they are their friends, and to win their confidence, so that they will tell them all their little troubles and difficulties, and let themselves be helped by the young ladies' superior intelligence and education. In a word, if the ladies of a house look after their own morals, they cannot but improve those of Bunch. Here, then, is a work you young ladies may do as holy and useful as the most painstaking district-visiting without going beyond the door of your father's house. Teach girls like Bunch to become good servants, and therefore in time to become good wives and mothers, and you will be doing a work for God and man of quite inestimable value.

I once saw a pretty picture called "Leaving Home." A

good and modest girl, who is also pretty, is represented by the artist on the point of leaving home for the first time, to enter domestic service. As she stands at the cottage-door, receiving the farewell caress of her mother, while the honest old grandfather, and the little sister bringing even her doll to say good-bye, look on sorrowfully, perhaps wondering at the change in their family life, the departure of this simple country maid, for whom the carrier's waggon is waiting, seems a touching incident of ordinary human experience. If her future mistress could see the anxious faces of her parents, and feel but for a moment what these must feel, as they pray for her virtue and happiness there would surely be more thoughtful care of the young servant, without indolent indulgence, but with a determination to win her confidence and to guide her in the path of safety.

"Senex," which every schoolboy knows is Latin for "Old Fogey," lately wrote to a daily paper as follows:—

"My wife advertised in a well-known journal for a nurse, and received, among many applications, one in which the mother of the girl objected to her daughter wearing caps and print dresses, and also said she must hold herself as a 'young lady.' What are the unemployed coming to? Is the School Board at fault?"

It would lessen the indignation of mistresses who read the objection of this foolishly fond mother, if they were to ask themselves whether they do not like their own offspring to better themselves or get into "society" where perhaps even they are not always welcome.

But should a servant "hold herself as a young lady"? Cer-

tainly, unless she believes, as we do, that the word "girl" or "woman" is higher and better than "lady"—a title which is now so soiled with ignoble use that it is more respectable not to be called by it. It is true that we cannot imagine the mother of Bunch insisting on her daughter being called "a young lady." Probably old Mrs. Bunch was too much of nature's gentleman to have to insist upon her rights, and had enough Christian instruction to know that the greatest is not he or she who serves least, but he or she who serves most. Respecting herself and her position, and bringing up Bunch to do the same she would be quite indifferent about the title given to her daughter.

"Are you resolved?" asks Mr. Ruskin, "that you will never have any but your inferiors to serve you? or shall Enid ever lay your trencher with tender little thumb, and Cinderella sweep your hearth, and be cherished there? It *might* come to that in time, and plate and hearth be the brighter; but if your servants are to be held your inferiors, at least be sure they *are so* and that you are indeed wiser, and better-tempered, and more useful than they. Determine what their education ought to be, and organize proper servants' schools, and then give it them. So they will be fit for their position, and will do honour to it, and stay in it: let the masters be as sure they do honour to theirs, and are as willing to stay in that. And for the rest, the dearth of good service—if such there be—may perhaps wholesomely teach us that, if we were all a little more in the habit of serving ourselves in many matters, we should be none the worse, or the less happy."

Perhaps some of our readers would like to see what more is

said in the "Memoir of Sydney Smith" about Bunch. Here is her little biography.

"Bunch was a very robust and broad-set girl, and doubtless that fact accounts for the sobriquet she received from her master. Her real name was Rachel Masterman, and her duties were to wait on Sydney Smith at table, to attend to the justice-room, to bring the hot water in the morning, and, in a word, to make herself generally useful. In process of time Bunch became cook, and married the coachman. Her last days were spent in York, and she died there a considerable time ago." When Bunch was promoted to the position of cook, another little girl was "caught up," and installed in the vacant place. Two years ago she was living in old age near York, and related to Sydney Smith's last biographer characteristic acts of kindness, which explain the attachment which the servants of the witty Canon of St. Paul's felt for their master. Their allegiance to him was close and loyal, and such as mere money can never obtain.

Canon Kingsley was another kind and considerate master. "Let me tell you," says his daughter, "how we were taught to help those who helped us in our dear old home at Eversley Rectory. Of course, in a busy house, where every one has work to do, the servants cannot be helped much week-days, except by thoughtfulness in little things. But there is the seventh day when the children have no lessons to do. This was what we were taught to look upon as the 'helpers' day of rest, as far as we could make it so. In the morning breakfast was earlier than usual. While we were breakfasting the maids were emptying our baths, for they were too heavy for us children.

As soon as breakfast was over we trotted off to our rooms, made the beds, folded up and put away all our clothes, dusted—and, in fact, put things straight all around. Then we ran down to the dining-room and laid the table for dinner; and capital butlers we all became, I assure you. By these means the maids were all ready in their nice Sunday dresses to go to church with us all at eleven. Dinner Sunday—no matter who was with us—was at one o'clock instead of seven. This was the only hot meal in the day. No cooking was done after one o'clock, as our supper was cold. At both dinner and supper the servants were sent away, and we waited at table. I laugh now when I think of the faces of horror of learned men or gallant soldiers who had come down to spend Sunday in the dear old rectory, or ridden over from Sandhurst or Aldershot to the morning service. The agonies they went through at being waited on by the daughters of the house! The struggles they made to be allowed to change their own plates! And their resigned submission when quietly told by the host, 'It is the way of the house!' That was how we were made to help the faithful and devoted servants who spent their lives in helping us. It was not much. But it gave them an almost free Sunday."

A lady and her daughter in Berlin, according to the *Fremdenblatt*, change places with their servants every other Sunday doing the entire household work themselves and giving up the drawing-room to the servants and their friends. The servants play on the piano, sing, read, knit, sew, and otherwise occupy themselves as they please, and are waited upon by the ladies, precisely as they themselves wait on ordinary days. Usually the servants have company on these peculiar occasions, and the

benevolent ladies have an extra dinner to cook, which they do, however, with cheerfulness, washing the dishes afterward. The literal observance of the Golden Rule is doubtless what the Berlin ladies intend, though of course the rule does not specify that persons need practise it only on every fourteenth day.

The celebrated Earl of Chesterfield left, by his will, legacies to all his menial servants, equal to two years' wages each, considering them "as his unfortunate friends, equal by birth, and only inferior by fortune." If employers would in this way look upon those whom they employ as "only inferior by fortune" to themselves, which is the literal truth, a difficult social problem would be solved at once.

"A mission worker" writes to the *Standard* suggesting that no help should be given to girls choosing home needlework instead of service as a means of making girls go into service. At present, according to this authority, "they prefer to work at starvation prices in order to be able to enjoy their liberty of an evening—such liberty as it is." Would it not be a more excellent way to alter the conditions of domestic service in the direction of giving more liberty?

Kindness to servants, as to children, means not simply indulgence, but care and thought for their best interests. If employers and servants were to learn the lessons contained in the original meaning of the two words "domestic" and "family," it would go far to settle the servant difficulty. By derivation, "domestic" means "home-like," and "family" one's servants, not one's children. The fashion of changing places as easily as clothes is, we see, quite a new discovery on the part of servants. Before we blame them, however, let us reflect that we, their

employers, are very far from being at rest and contented, and that no class has escaped the fever of modern change.

Though we have tried faithfully to show that mistresses have duties to perform to their servants, we cannot but see that these same mistresses are often to be pitied on account of the bad material they have to work upon. We all know that servants are "trying," though we may not express ourselves as strongly as Carlyle, who thought that they were among the enemies of the human race, and ranked them in his domestic economy as being only higher than bugs. Not without reason housekeepers now complain that they are vexed with a generation of servants who are wasteful, careless about their work and of every one's interest except of their own.

No doubt there always have been bad servants. That they were wasteful in Sir Walter Scott's day we know from the fact that he had "Waste not, want not," carved in stone over the kitchen fireplace at Abbotsford. The great novelist was, it seems, aware of the fact that England is a food-wasting nation, and that the Arabic proverb is found true in the result of waste—"Too much is the father of too little."

The Rev. Rowland Hill one day heard two of his domestics disputing as to which of them should wash the hall, each declaring that it was not her business. Sending them both out on an improvised errand, the eccentric clergyman took up the mop himself, and when, upon returning, they found him busy at his self-imposed work, they each warmly protested against his being engaged in so menial an occupation. "Pooh ! pooh !" said he, "it's not your business, Peggy ; nor yours, Jane ; so it must be mine, I suppose " Certainly no mistress

has a right to expect a servant to give up all her time to work, and never to wish to go out, but mistresses ought also to be considered. Employers of servants will be pleased to learn that there is a movement on foot to give mistresses at least three evenings in the week. This movement is not premature.

Not only do servants—in this not unlike their employers—desire to shirk work, but when they do condescend to use their hands they are far too ready to say “That will do,” and to leave their work half done.

Mistress: “Bridget, everything in the house is covered with dust. I can’t stand this dust any longer.” *Bridget*: “Do as I do, mum—don’t pay any attention to it.” But Bridget would have paid attention to it if she had given her heart to God, and had been endeavouring to serve Him in her work. Then she would have been like that servant girl who, on telling a friend that she was converted, was asked how she knew that this happy change had taken place in her life. Her reply was conclusive. “Now,” she said, “I sweep under the mats.” Before she turned to God she used to work with eye-service only; accordingly she swept the dust under the mats where it would not be seen, but when she became a servant of Christ, she tried to do the daily work of her life in a way that would please Him, whose eyes are everywhere.

It would much increase their happiness and usefulness if servants would take the noble view of their work which St. Paul teaches. Unlike so-called Christians in our day he never limited “Divine Service” to praying or listening to sermons in church. He thought that “Divine Service” was performed by servants when engaged at their ordinary tasks, for when

writing to them in his letter to the Colossians, he concludes his advice with these words, "Ye serve the Lord Christ." The sympathy of St. Paul went with servants into kitchens, nurseries, dining-rooms, refreshment-bars, gardens, stables, and said to them, "Your work is full of trials and difficulties and temptations, but cheer up, for there is One with you who can lessen your difficulties and strengthen you in the midst of temptations. Only do your work heartily, as unto the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that from the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance, for ye serve the Lord Christ."

The other day a servant said, on returning from a Bible-class where she had read what St. Paul says about the thorn in his flesh, "I shall not give my mistress notice as I had intended doing, I shall look on her bad temper as my thorn which it is good for me to have to bear." This was showing a proof of Christ speaking in her.

If more servants were influenced by such motives we would be less tormented with the sulkiness in looks and manner of those whom we pay for willing service, and not for service done "in the sulks," the looks protesting against what the hands do. Once we remember the mistress of a family being much disconcerted. Upon inquiry we found that it was caused by the servant: "She's in her tantrums this morning. I cannot get her to do her work, and everything is going wrong. It is always so when she is like that."

"Vainly Betty performs her part,
If a ruffled head and a ruffled heart
As well as the bed, want making."

Mistresses, remember that servants are made of the same

material as you are ; a little coarser grained, perhaps, but the same in essentials. Servants, remember that you are hired to help and not to hinder your employers. For both of you "Bear and forbear" is a golden rule.

"I'll not willingly offend,
Nor be easily offended :
What's amiss I'll strive to mend,
And endure what can't be mended."

Mistress (to new servant) : "We have breakfast generally about eight o'clock." *New Servant* : "Well, mum, if I ain't down to it, don't wait." *Mistress* (to amiable servant-maid) : "I am going to the opera this evening, so I shall probably be home late." *Amiable Maid* : "Oh, you needn't apologise."

These cuttings from an American newspaper are illustrations of the tyranny that so-called servants are exercising in that country. With us things are not quite so bad, but they are tending that way, and we may soon see advertisements like the following, not in *Punch* only, but in all the papers :—

"Cheerful and willing mistress wanted by an under-house-maid who wears a fringe and latest form of dress-improver, and considers herself generally attractive. State number of men-servants, and furnish particulars of the sort of society that may be expected downstairs. Advertiser will expect to receive her own friends on the afternoons of not less than three days in each week. Mistress may refer to servants at present staying in house, who can speak favourably as to her character. Apply, Hilda, Eligible Family Supply Agency, Walker Street, W."

"Useful and active mistress required by a general servant who will expect her to do her fair share of the work. Master must

clean the windows and his own boots, and as advertiser is not an early riser, get up when necessary, and let in the sweeps. Entire Sundays expected out and no interference with visits of the Marine Store Dealer. Character Mutual. S. S. S., Eligible Family Supply Agency, Walker Street, W."





CHAPTER XVI.

DAUGHTER-FULL HOUSES—FOR WHAT?

“‘But that’s servant’s work?’ Of course it is. What business have you to hope to be better than a servant of servants? ‘God made you a lady?’ Yes, He has put you, that is to say, in a position in which you may learn to speak your own language beautifully; to be accurately acquainted with the elements of other languages; to behave with grace, tact, and sympathy to all around you; to know the history of your country, the commands of its religion, and the duties of its race. If you obey His will in learning these things, you will obtain the power of becoming a true ‘lady;’ and you will become one, if while you learn these things you set yourself, with all the strength of your youth and womanhood, to serve His servants, until the day come when He calls you to say, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.’”—*Ruskin*.



EARLY twenty years ago I wrote a youthful essay entitled, “Daughter-full Houses—For What?” and read it at the Philosophical Society of the University at which I was then an undergraduate. Notice of the essays to be read each week were posted up on a notice board at the gate. One of the porters,

are not to be had in anything like the number required. For every situation vacant as clerk in a telegraph office or nursery governess there are hundreds of applicants, but if you want a domestic servant you may give high wages and better food than you partake of yourself, and only get a very inferior article to take your situation with many apologies to herself and her friends for doing so. More wonderful still, young ladies go out of their homes in quest of some "genteel employment," leaving their own comfortable kitchen in the occupation of a strange girl, who may be neither clean nor honest.

In one of Jean Ingelow's books the hero says: "Being in a confidential humour, I talked over some of the troubles of human life with a pleasant, careworn gentlewoman who lived in one of my houses, and she admitted that there was nothing in the house she could not do with pleasure, but she must have a servant, else 'who was to answer the door?'"

"It would be bad for your health to answer it yourself?"

"She scorned the question. 'No; but sometimes people come to call.'"

"So you pay about forty-five pounds a year, the difference between comfort and poverty, chiefly that these callers may have a maid-of-all-work to answer the door for them instead of a gentlewoman."

Why should a gentlewoman think herself above doing this or any other kind of useful work? Is work only "genteel" which is comparatively useless, and are girls really more lady-like when they run from pillar to post trying to earn a few shillings by this "fancy work," or by that than they would be if they engaged in useful cooking, cleaning, or attending to

children either in a father's house or in that of some one else? If only they would stay at home and put their hands to anything that had to be done they could save their fathers far more money than the cost of keeping them.

A few years ago a young English bride went out with her husband to Montana, where he had a ranch. Being a true woman, she quickly fitted herself to her new surroundings. There were hardships to bear, and struggles to be made. But, though she had been brought up in the luxuries and comforts of an English home, she took up cheerfully these daily burdens, and carried them with a courage and a liveliness that won the admiration of her husband.

Her friends in England, to whom she wrote every week, pitied her and sent commiserating replies, lamenting that she had to labour like a slave indoors, and was killing herself with hard work. To their "How can you do it?" she thus answered:—

"I like the work. When you have no society, and every one is *out of doors* working, you must work for amusement *indoors*. I do think this is the best sort of life. One feels much better and happier; so would any other healthy girl.

"Of course washing dishes, scrubbing floors, and all the rest of it, does sound and seem a great hardship to people at home; but I can assure you it doesn't seem so when you do it.

"I know I would not exchange my happy, free, busy, healthy life out here for the weariness and *ennui* that make so many girls at home miserable. I don't feel myself to be an object of pity—quite the reverse. I only wonder that more people who

are miserable on small incomes at home don't come out here and be happy.

"What do you gain by being out here? Health and happiness, plenty to do, plenty of interests and amusements. Let us see what you lose. Society, and the luxury of sitting with your hands folded, seeing others do badly what you feel you can do much better yourself.

"I am thoroughly happy with my varied occupations and amusements, and if I have some cares (and who has not?), have I not many joys to counterbalance them? so give me my home in

' The West, the West, the land of the free,
Where the mighty Missouri rolls down to the sea,'

and I am more than content." The problem of "Our Daughters" would easily be solved if they would only act in this way in England.

The more I think of it the more do I incline to the opinion that the elevation of domestic work to its true position will be found to be the solution of this knotty problem of "the employment of women."

Certainly domestic service as it is now has no attractions for educated women, but then we hope that it will not so remain. Why should not domestic service be entered on as a vocation, in a spirit as high and with aims as beneficent as sick nursing? The status of a trained nurse is very different now from what it used to be, and the profession of a domestic servant will be equally highly esteemed when the right sort of girls join it. Indeed, as prevention is better than cure, the

servant who by attention to cleanliness and by skill in cookery prevents disease ought to rank even higher than a nurse. Oh, for a Florence Nightingale of the kitchen and for a little more of that Christian courtesy which, if forthcoming, would induce employers to consider servants as good as themselves, only less fortunate.

But did not the lady-help scheme which was started so enthusiastically some years ago come to nothing? Certainly, because the ladies proved to be anything but helps. They wanted to get the cream of domestic service, and to leave its skimmed milk for others. Women who enter domestic service, imagining that it means dusting china and arranging dinner-tables, are as valueless there as those who rush into nursing in the belief that it means reading hymns and smoothing pillows.

Then consider the great demand that there is in all our colonies for domestic servants. A letter from New Zealand says that "B. C., a workhouse girl of sixteen, gets ten shillings a week, is treated quite as one of the family, has a horse to ride, has put £4 15s. in the bank, and naively says that she has had two offers of marriage, but thinks herself far too young to marry at present. So great have been the domestic difficulties in this colony that, on news of a vessel being signalled, a servantless mistress drove her dogcart twenty-six miles, without waiting for her breakfast, down to the port; but all in vain, for every one of the 131 servants was engaged and carried off before she arrived. This lady quaintly described the importance of her own charwoman and laundress, who, on her late mistress's second visit to the Northern Island, came to offer to let her one of her villa-

residences, having gone into a larger one herself on retiring from business."

Why do the surplus of three-quarters of a million of women remain in this country to spend their lives in misery and starvation or worse, when every letter from the colonies speaks of the ceaseless demand for women as servants?

And the conditions of domestic servants abroad are such that it would be found not distasteful to educated ladies, while they would be highly appreciated. Employers have to pass so much time with their "helps" that they would greatly benefit by their domestic duties being shared by persons with whom intercourse would be carried on with advantage on both sides. Then if she wished to have a house of her own; the well-educated, refined young lady who adds a practical knowledge of household duties to her accomplishments would not have long to wait. She could pick and choose a husband amongst the educated men who now emigrate in numbers. She would be a far more suitable companion for an educated gentleman than the smart "young person" whom he is often driven to marry in his loneliness and need of womanly sympathy.

While I am of opinion that justice demands that no artificial barriers should prevent women entering any business or profession open to men, I would advise all women in whom I was interested not to enter one which may injure their womanly nature. Girls as well as boys should be given by their parents some sort of bread-winning business, but it should be of a kind that will not separate them from womanly household life. This is one great advantage which domestic service has above other

occupations for women. Another is that the moral element cannot be overlooked in a servant. A mill-owner troubles himself little about the morals of his "hands," but no one would ignore the question of character when engaging a nurse or lady's maid.

"Certainly, whatever becomes of them, my five daughters will never do mineral work." These were the words which a mother who had more "pride" than sense or knowledge of English spoke a few days ago in my hearing. Those who have a horror of "mineral" or menial work (for this, it appears, is what was meant) will be very indignant at the suggestion that real ladies should enter domestic service and elevate it into a profession as much respected as that of sick nursing.

But really it is impossible to give an answer to the question, Daughter-full Houses—for what? so long as women consider that idleness is less degrading than so-called menial work. It is not what we do, but how we do it, that is of importance, and no real lady or gentleman thinks that anything that has to be done is beneath them. No position in society is so high that it cannot be degraded, and there is none so humble that it cannot be ennobled. Young ladies ought to take what they can get, and turn their hands to anything they can do. And their fathers and mothers should have that proper pride for them which is only ashamed of idleness and dishonest work. I believe that at the present time any really well-born, well-educated lady who so far defies Mrs. Grundy as to open a shop, become a domestic servant, or carry a parcel through the streets, is in so doing the truest kind of philanthropist.

She is strengthening the hands of those who would resist that tyranny of foolish custom which forces girls and women to starve in the midst of plenty. A true lady is a lady anywhere, and under any circumstances, and cannot fail to influence those around her. Why, then, should she feel that her position will be lowered through working with her hands any more than through working with her head?

"Lady Help Wanted as Housemaid in small family where cook and nurse are ladies."

We have just read the above advertisement, and hope that we may take it as an indication that the "lady help" system is not altogether a failure. When real "ladies" become cooks and nurses it will be a grand success. A real lady knows that she is just as much a lady when she sweeps a room as when she plays upon a piano, or sits on a sofa doing crewel work.

Even among those who most disinterestedly devote themselves to the advancement of female industry, there may be often observed a tendency to find the work for the worker, rather than the worker for the work. Poor ladies come to them and plead not what they can do, but that they are "so well connected," and employment is sought for them sometimes less suited to their ability or education than to the position of their grandfather the general or their uncle the dean.

What kind of employment, however, can be found for destitute gentlewomen if they are unmethodical, inattentive to detail, and unaccustomed to plod? They are too often useless because they have never been taught to do any one thing well, because their only stock-in-trade is that general

intelligence which everybody can claim, and which comes to much the same as particular ignorance. We hope that it may soon become generally fashionable for every girl to learn something practical besides and beyond the graces of education. She ought to be as ashamed of knowing no business by which she could at need earn her own daily bread, or add comforts to the home which shelters her, as her brother is, or ought to be. Certainly trade premiums and courses of instruction cost money, and this is a consideration with the owners of Daughter-full houses. We think, however, that the money which girls now waste on perishable and un-beautiful finery would quite suffice for this, and if spent in this way would keep them instructed and interested in the present, and safe and happy in the future.

Innumerable branches of industry and skill offer themselves to suit all tastes and powers. All depends upon the way girls prepare themselves for work and go about looking for it. "When you seek employment," says Mr. Haweis, "put on your best dress and your pleasantest face. I knew of a young girl in straitened circumstances at home, who had often had her fancy work refused; but one day she adopted the above method, gained a grudging order for a few things from one firm in the City, went on encouraged by this to another, who gave her a larger order; hurried back to the first to decline the small order; was pressed then to take a *double* order; went home with more orders than she could execute; met a Sister of Mercy in the street, who recommended her some poor "hands." She employed them, executed all her orders, and has worked for those firms ever since."

And the women who have learned to support themselves without matrimony are just those who are most likely to get happily married. Nor can we imagine any prouder moment for a young bride than when she crowns her husband's loving provision for her with a modest dowry of her own earning, thus spurring him to do his utmost for one so worthy of him, and silently assuring him that the hand put in his, though soft to clasp, is also strong to help if the necessity should ever come.





CHAPTER XVII.

“BE YE GOOD MONEY-CHANGERS.”

“As you hazard a minnow to hook in a trout, so one guinea thrown out with address is often the best bait for a hundred.”—*Lord Lytton*.

“Obviously the whole value of the dime is in knowing what to do with it.”—*Emerson*.

“Put not your trust in money, but put your money in trust.”—*Oliver Wendell Holmes*.



THE old maxim, “Be ye good money-changers,” is one which all women, but especially married women, should learn to obey. I once heard a woman who sold fruit in a back street loudly declaring that she did not think that there were three men in London who supported their wives. Certainly the number of married women who add considerably to the family income by their earnings is a large one. Larger still is the number of unmarried women, especially in the

middle-class, who are compelled to be money-makers as well as money-changers. Nevertheless, we cannot but think that the right division of labour is for men to earn the money and for women to change it—that is to say, to manage it properly, or put it to the very best account.

"Now," said a bridegroom to a bride, when they returned from the honeymoon trip, "let us have a clear understanding before we settle down to married life; are you to be president or vice-president of this concern?" "I want to be neither president nor vice-president," she answered; "I will be content with a subordinate position." "What is that?" "Controller of the currency." Controllorship of the currency a "subordinate position"! This estimate of a wife's duty was more modest than truthful, for to save, or, rather, to get the most value out of money, by steering between penuriousness on the one hand, and wastefulness on the other, is no easy matter. Indeed, it is more difficult to spend money properly than to make it, and the more difficult task, as usual, falls to the woman. Domestic economy is her especial province—

"The man may spend,
And money lend,
 If his wife be aught;
But he may work,
And try to save,
And will have nought,
 If his wife be naught."

If married women would know their rights and duties in the use of money they should have the needed practical business instruction. And the time to begin is in girlhood.

Our girls, no less than our boys, should have a business education. They should master the art, if not the science, of book-keeping and other lines of study that would fit them for their duties in their department of the marriage firm, even as their brothers are instructed and trained for the work they are expected to perform. When this is done, and not sooner, will the family ideal be complete, its workings become harmonious and satisfactory, and the wife understand her rights and duties in the use of money.

"Every wise woman buildeth her house; but the foolish plucketh it down with her hands."

In these days, when it is so difficult to get good servants, it would be a good rule in daughter-full houses if the mother would give each daughter, when about ten years old, some household duties to perform. For this a sum of money should be paid her weekly, which would serve as pocket-money, furnish part of her wardrobe, and teach her to become a good money-changer. As the girl grows older these household duties should increase, with a proportionate increase of money paid for the performance of them. We know of a lady who divides the cost of keeping another servant among her three daughters.

The girl who has in this way been accustomed to the management of money will become a good business woman, and will do far more good in her day and generation. Such was the wife of the late Archbishop of Canterbury. Though accustomed to abundant means in her first married homes, and in her later ones with large revenues at command, she exercised a vigilant control over their expenditure, never grudging what was spent

on others, but most abstemious in all that concerned herself. "It seemed," her husband wrote, "as if it would have made her positively unhappy that God should have bestowed on her so many common worldly blessings unless she had been able to share them with all who were brought within her influence." The business connected with a large orphanage she managed entirely herself, and her account books connected with this and with her household were kept in a manner not unworthy of a head clerk in the Bank of England.

On the right use of money depends, in a large measure, the happiness of ourselves and of those belonging to us. On the other hand, she who has not learned to be a good money-changer will be almost certain to suffer herself and cause others to suffer from some of the many miseries that spring from the mismanagement of money. Of these none is worse than the misery of being in debt. Whoever will live above her present circumstances is in great danger of living, in a little time, much below them. This truth is graphically presented to us in Micawber's household economy: "Annual income twenty pounds, annual expenditure nineteen nineteen six, result—Happiness. Annual income twenty pounds, annual expenditure twenty pounds nought and six, result—Misery. The blossom is blighted, the leaf is withered, the god of day goes down upon the dreary scene, and—in short, you are for ever flooded."

Here is a story which shows how Her Majesty the Queen, even when a young girl, appreciated the moral courage which can say, "I can't afford it." Drina, as the Queen was called when a girl in her family circle, was fond of going out shopping

with her half-sister and governess, and the three often went, as other ladies do, to various shops at the West End. One day they went to a jeweller's to make some purchase, but the attendant was busy serving another young lady with a gold chain. She was some time selecting one, and when at last the choice was made and she asked the price, a look of great disappointment overspread her face. "It is too much," she said; "I cannot afford such a high price," and a less costly chain had to be selected. Drina and her friends had been watching all this, and as soon as the young lady had left the shop the Princess asked if the shopman knew her. "Oh, yes, I know her; she is one of our customers," he said. "Then send her the chain she wished so much to possess, and I will pay for it. Tell her the Princess Alexandrina wished her to accept it for her self-control in resisting the temptation to buy what she could not afford."

As a rule women are more self-denying and can say "I can't afford it" with greater ease than men can; but there are exceptions, as fathers and husbands know to their cost. The greater longevity of women as compared with men appears to be well borne out by the statistics of every country that has yet been examined. This shows that, after all, it is not low dresses, heavy skirts, and thin shoes that kill. It is the paying for them that does it. "My dear wife," as the man said when he looked at the last milliner's bill.

The following illustration of Scottish economy we commend to the notice of English ladies whose bonnets often cost more than they can afford: "One bonnet had served Maggie for a dozen years, and some ladies, in offering to present her with a new one, asked whether she would prefer a silk or a straw one.

'Weel,' said Maggie, 'I think I'll tak' a straw ane; it will maybe be a mouthfu' to the coo when I'm through wi' it.' If I could discover and tell my lady readers how much is spent each year on bonnets alone, one half of them would be filled with remorse, and the other half with despair. Napoleon once gave Josephine *carte blanche* on the bonnet question, and found that the natural instinct demanded thirty-six per month. This natural instinct for dress, when not kept in check by God's supernatural grace, brings women of all classes into trouble.

Dr. Johnson's friend Langton told his father that he had "no turn to economy." Hearing this, Johnson said that a thief might as well plead that he had no turn to honesty. The woman who has no turn to economy is not likely to be very honest or a credit to her friends.

A good money-changer plans or portions out at the beginning of the year the money she has to spend. So much for charity, so much for dress, board and lodging so much, recreation so much. Keeping an account acts as a check upon the imagination. It shows us "where we are," what our income will do, and at what points we can most easily retrench, if retrenchment should become desirable. It is a habit which should be instilled into all young people the moment they have pocket-money. If spending money is the favourite excitement of many women, this is because, having had little or no money to spend until marriage, they had no opportunity of learning its use, of becoming good money-changers.

People often buy what they cannot afford, because, having the money in hand, they imagine they can afford it; whereas,

had they planned it out, they would have known that it was all needed for necessities. Sydney Smith puts the matter well when he says, "If you want to make the most of a small income, and have a thought of buying anything, always ask yourself these two questions: 'Do I really want it?' 'Can I do without it?'" These two questions, answered honestly, will double your fortune."

A woman is rich who lives upon what she *has*. A woman is poor who lives upon what is *coming*. A prudent woman lives within her income, whatever that may be, and saves against a rainy day. Extravagance is not in how much we spend, but in how we spend. A thousand pounds may be laid out thriftily; a solitary shilling may be shamefully squandered.

How is it that some make money go so much farther than others? Because they take the trouble to think and manage. Nor is it "mean" to do this. Frugality saves people from "meanness," and enables them to be generous. Indeed, it is a safe rule that what is often called "open-handedness" in trifles, involves inability to be truly beneficent. Then we must remember that relations and friends have to think for those who are too lazy to think for themselves.

We should get a firm hold of the fact that our money is not ours, but God's. Even if we earn it, He gives us the strength to do so, and can withhold it at His will. It was this thought that made William Penn write so wisely about the spending of money. Amongst other things, he says: "Frugality is good, if liberality be joined with it. The first is leaving off superfluous expenses; the last is bestowing them to the benefit of others that need. The first without the last begets covetous-

ness ; the last without the first begets prodigality." A gentleman was one day relating to a Quaker a tale of deep distress, and concluded by saying, "I could not but feel for him." "Verily, friend," replied the Quaker, "thou didst right in that thou didst feel for thy neighbour ; but didst thou feel in the right place—didst thou feel in thy pocket ?"

She may and she ought to know that every penny wrongly given away does her neighbour more harm than good ; but a good woman will in a wise way "spread out her hand to the poor," and feel for them in her pocket.

These are days of love of display and of "keeping up appearances," when families of wealthy men are too often left in straitened circumstances, and "distressed gentlewomen" abound. Men are afraid to marry on incomes which their fathers thought ample, and the enforced celibacy leads to other social disorders. Instead of resisting the tyranny of fashion and Mrs. Grundy, many women are willing slaves to a false pride which is very costly. "Pride is as loud a beggar as want, and a great deal more saucy. When you have bought one fine thing you must buy ten more, that your appearance may be all of a piece ; but it is easier to suppress the first desire than to satisfy all that follow it."

Shopping is, perhaps, the favourite amusement of ladies, as fathers and husbands know but too well. It is told of a gentleman that he had a passion for the purchase of second-hand furniture at auctions, and that in making "good bargains" he had filled his house with antiquated and almost useless articles. Upon one occasion his wife took the responsibility, without consulting or apprising her husband, to have a portion of the least

useful removed to an auction-room. Great was her dismay when, on the evening of the day of sale, the majority of the articles came back to the house. The husband had stumbled into the auction-room, and, not knowing his own furniture, had purchased it at better bargains than at first.

As a rule, it is the wife rather than the husband who is a bargain-hunter, but this little anecdote shows how the amusement may become an absorbing passion. In nine cases out of ten, things are "cheap" because they are inferior, and what is called a "bargain" is, especially if you do not want it, dear at any price :—

Husband (irascibly): "We don't need that rug any more than a cat needs two tails. How often have I told you, my dear, not to buy anything because it's cheap?" *Wife* (with the air of one who has got the better of the argument): "It wasn't cheap, my love."

This wife may have spoken more truly than she knew, for even if we get an article for a very little money, this may be because the wretched men, or more generally women, who made it received starvation wages. Not the least offenders against the Christian law are women who carelessly wear fine clothes without inquiring into the possible cost in a sister's shame or death, and bargain-mongers who forget that some "cheap" things are too dear for "human" use.

A really honourable person like the great Duke of Wellington would scorn to take a "bargain" wrung out of another's necessities. A suggestion was once made to this "officer and gentleman" to purchase a farm in the neighbourhood of Strathfieldsaye, which lay contiguous to his estate, and was therefore

a valuable acquisition, to which he assented. When the purchase was completed, his steward congratulated him upon having had such a bargain, as the seller was in difficulties, and forced to part with it. "What do you mean by a bargain?" said the Duke. The other replied, "It was valued at £1,100, and we have got it for £800." "In that case," said the Duke, "you will please to carry the extra £300 to the late owner, and never talk to me of cheap land again."

To be true and just in all our money dealings does, of course, entail a little self-denial, but it greatly diminishes the misery of the world. The dressmaker you employ may be living from hand to mouth, and, if you do not promptly pay her the small sum you owe, she may have to go without a Sunday dinner. With a well-filled purse it may be a great saving of trouble to pay just what is asked without going into items, but overpaying is as wrong as underpaying—you are thereby making it harder for those who are not so well off, and raising unduly the market value of time or produce.

If you begin when you are young to recognize the importance of money obligations and the misery of debt, you are laying by a small fortune for yourselves. Learning how to spend money means many pounds a year in your pocket, and much trouble saved to others. "I wish you would not give me such short weight for my money," said a housekeeper to a grocer, who had an outstanding bill against her. "And I wish you wouldn't give me such long wait for mine," replied the grocer.



CHAPTER XVIII.

HEALTH PRESERVERS.

"It is to women that we must look first and last for the application of sanitary knowledge, as far as household hygiene is concerned."
Florence Nightingale.

"If we could get wives, mothers, and daughters to learn the little that tends to health, we should soon have an easy victory, and health would almost cease to be known. Health would be a recognized and practised by everybody."—*Dr. Richardson.*



Of the many honourable titles that are due to good women, that of health-preserver is by no means the least appropriate. The mistress of a household has been so long forced upon her the consideration of questions as pure air, pure and nourishing food, the economical and digestible way of cooking food, the best and most healthful mode of clothing the body, the management and regulation of the household as regards cleanliness, &c.

tion, removal of bad smells, &c. ; and last, but not least, the management of the body in illness, and the prevention of the spread of infectious or preventable diseases. Nurse holds the health of the children entrusted to her care practically in her hands, and cook may be a most formidable rival of the physician in preventing disease.

"No point in the warfare against disease," writes Dr. Richardson, "is so important as that of getting the women of the household to work heart and soul after good health in the household. We always look to women for the cleanliness and tidiness of home. We say a home is miserable if a good wife and mother be not at the head of it to direct the internal arrangements. A slovenly woman is a mark for discredit ; but there can be no doubt that the excellences of tidy women in respect to order and cleanliness have, without any distinct system or mode of scientific education, saved us often from severe and fatal outbreaks of disease."

In their capacity of health-preservers, women should insist upon all over whom they have any influence attending to perfect ablution, for without this the skin cannot remain long in a healthy state. Female servants, it is to be feared, do not as a class obey nature's "order of the bath" as much as they should ; and it is difficult to see how the young lady who does not tub every morning can retain self-respect. Much may be done by women to further temperance in eating and drinking. They should make their children eat slowly, and accustom them to a diet composed more of vegetables than of meat. Every good health-preserver will also show an example of early rising. It is now the fashion to be a

hospital nurse and to wear a picturesque uniform, but surely it is better to keep people well than to make them well, and the good housekeeper, more than any one else, enables the members of her house to keep well.

Whatever else may be included in the "higher education" of women health-knowledge ought certainly not to be neglected. Of what comfort will Latin and Greek be to her if her baby dies of insufficient clothing or improper feeding, as thousands of infants die every year? Of what use her mathematics and history if she injures her constitution by over-application, or dies of typhoid fever through not having the knowledge to remedy a defective drain? The most important thing for a woman to learn is how to live well herself and keep others well.

The late Sir James Clark attached great value to the opportunity ladies have for inculcating the first principles of physical as well as moral health when acting as district visitors. He says: "The working classes can be effectually taught only by personal intercourse—by visiting them at their own houses, and there instructing them in all that relates to the sanitary management of their households. Personal advice, thus kindly and delicately given on the spot, will make a deeper and more lasting impression than many lectures and volumes of tracts; and it will often happen also, that, along with the mothers, the daughters may at the same time receive a useful lesson. By such visiting, conducted with discretion and tact, and confined to sanitary subjects, the greatest benefit may be conferred on the working classes."

Though women ought to be health-preservers, some of

them are so negligent of their duty in this respect, that they do not even take care of their own well-being. Miss Francis Cobbe tells us that "if we take a state of perfect soundness to be represented by 100, the health of few ladies (it applies to men as well as to women) will be found to rise above 80 or 90 ; that of the majority will be, I fear, about 75 ; and a large contingent about 50 or 60, In short, the health of women of the upper class is, I think, unquestionably far *below par*. Whatever light their burners were calculated to shed on the world, *the gas is half-turned*, and cannot afford anything beyond a feeble glimmer." With the vice as well as the misery caused by this *petite santé* of women, some of us are familiar. Men get callous owing to their homes being made miserable by the unsettled habits, irregular meals, cheerless and depressed condition of their wives. They do not exert themselves in their daily duties when ill-health makes their wives hysterical, peevish, and so incapable of looking after their households that there is in them the maximum of expenditure with the minimum of enjoyment.

As it is impossible for a woman to fulfil the obligations of marriage without health, it follows that every girl who is a candidate for matrimony should take care of her health, and for the sake of others neglect nothing that will make her physically strong and active. Some married women suffer terribly because when they married they were ignorant of natural laws which they should have learned to obey. And then when the first-born babe does arrive many a young mother knows as little what to do with it as a dog does with a hedgehog.

If the house-mother, as the Germans call her, is worried, over-anxious, and irritable, the children become dull, depressed, and also irritable; the husband grows discontented, and either adds to the general worry or seeks his pleasures out of doors, thereby increasing his wife's troubles; and the servants, ceasing to be under proper control, and getting only cross looks and words of annoyance for their pains, soon wax insubordinate. A bad temper in the mistress of a house is a true curse to all about her; but just as the majority of diseases are preventable if due care and knowledge is displayed in the management of health, so bad temper and fretfulness are in the vast majority of cases quite preventable. Fretfulness and irritability are as much symptoms of disease as the headache or neuralgia which they so frequently accompany; and, as a rule, their causes are overwork, want of change, indigestion and insufficient nutrition, anxiety, disturbed sleep, bad air, or any or all of these unhealthy conditions combined. Many women look upon devotion to their households, constant self-sacrifice in little things, and neglect of their own persons, both externally and internally, as heroic, and glory in sufferings endured, as they think, for the benefit of their husbands and families; but no greater mistake could be made than to think any one derives advantage from their self-imposed injuries.

It is the duty of a wife to retain her good looks as long as she can for her husband's sake, and this can only be done by obeying the laws of health. I have read of a young lady at the Court of France in its gayest day, who never painted nor puffed, nor did anything that all the others did, but

depended entirely on nature for her beauty of complexion. The queen was in the habit of frolicsomenely asking one of the ladies to do something, and causing all the rest to follow her example. Well, one night it came to the turn of the natural beauty, who at once called for soap and water and a towel, and in the presence of Her Majesty and Court washed and dried her face. Of course the other ladies had to follow suit, and we can imagine what old frights some of them looked after the operation.

The best and cheapest physicians are Dr. Quiet, Dr. Diet, and Dr. Merryman, but they are not consulted by some women as much as they ought to be. Often a woman will go labouring on at whatever she may have in hand, sewing, running up and down stairs, nursing and amusing the children, dusting and tidying and superintending the kitchen, when aching head and limbs and tired eyes have long ago indicated that rest was needful. She says that she does not care what she eats, and that anything will do for her. She hurries through her meals, and either runs about or begins to work directly after eating. "This is not the way," says Dr. Diet, "to keep a good digestion." Dr. Merryman prescribes exercise in the open air; as much change of scene and amusement as is compatible with honest work (which also is necessary); cheerful society; and an occasional concert or visit to the theatre.

"Ailing mothers make moaning children," and it is said that many young mothers of the upper and middle class are now "ailing," because in their girlhood they studied too hard to meet the demands of the "higher education" of women.

But the honours of all the universities in the world would not compensate for the loss of digestion. Some people bend over books for ten or twelve hours a day, and the result is only a crooked back if not a crooked mind. It is not what we eat but what we digest that nourishes our bodies, and it is not what we read but what we remember that strengthens our minds. Cows don't give any the more milk for being often milked, nor do children learn any more because of very long hours in a hot room. The higher education of women is not advanced but greatly hindered by lowering their vitality.

It is often said that "young mothers very generally lose their first child," ignorance of the rules of hygiene in food, dress, doctoring, and general treatment being the cause; ignorance that is as morally culpable and inexcusable as deplorable in its results. If the Almighty has committed to your care an immortal being, enclosed in a very frail casket, which may suffer throughout life from carelessness or ignorance on your part, and become a burden, not only to himself but to others, reflect on your enormous responsibility, acquire the necessary knowledge, and earnestly strive to meet all difficulties relating to the early care of the precious charge. The profession of motherhood is one of the most responsible in the world, and yet the majority plunge into it with no preparatory training and little thought or knowledge of its requirements. If mothers could be convinced that a large proportion of the troublesome faults of childhood proceed from errors in their physical treatment, much useless fault-finding would be abandoned. Fresh air and wholesome nourishment, regular hours, and happy surroundings, would cure many irritable nerves, prevent many a

fit of passion, and brighten up many a sluggish and torpid mind.

“ Maybe he is not well ;
Infirmity doth still neglect all office,
Whereto our health is bound ; we are not ourselves
When nature, being oppressed, commands the mind
To suffer with the body.”

It is generally so with adults ; it is constantly so with children. They are naughty because they are “ below par,” and refuse to work at books because they have not the power. What seems to us great wickedness in another may be ill-health or insanity, partial or complete, temporary or chronic. We see people fall into violent passions, especially little children. Now a violent passion or fit of obstinacy may be caused by a temporary congestion of the brain. The consequence of beating a child for this is that the brain, which was already for some cause or another filled with blood, becomes more crowded still. It is hardly ever right to beat a child when in a fit of passion. You will do more with a little one of three or four years of age by management. Take him on your knee and say, “ My dear child, you are not well ; but when you give me a smile I shall give you a kiss in return.” I once knew a black nurse who, whenever the child under her charge got into a rage, used quietly to hand him a glass of water, and say, “ Der, take dat.” She was a moralist and a physiologist, and knew that sudden fits of obstinacy and passion are not hastily to be treated as moral delinquencies, springing, as they often do, from physical causes.

Our minds and bodies are co-partners. A thousand subtle

chords vibrate from one to the other. The young girl who is wearied with a short walk, who sits up very late and lies in bed in the morning, who eats sweets between meals, who aims at a fine-lady ideal, which is now happily passing away, and wishes to be fragile and willowy, pale and delicate-looking, this sort of girl grows into a woman lacking that bodily health upon which much that is best in the soul-life is based. Happily, however, though many of the customs of society sadly militate against health, it is now the fashion for girls and women to be healthy. A girl need not now blush to eat a good dinner, to wear stout shoes, or to confess that she has muscles and that she exercises them.

In no other way can women make themselves so useful in the world as by endeavouring to preserve their own health and the health of others. For "sickness is a cannibal which eats up all the life and youth it can lay hold of, and absorbs its own sons and daughters. It is a pale, wailing, distracted phantom, absolutely selfish, heedless of what is good and great, attentive to its sensations, losing its soul, and afflicting other souls with meanness and mopings, and with ministration to its voracity of trifles."





CHAPTER XIX.

HOW TO BE HAPPY THOUGH SINGLE.¹

"No spectacle certainly can be more unlovely or provocative of censure than that of one of a sex in which all the gentleness, the tender sympathies and kindnesses of life should predominate, dried up into unwomanly hardness, or settled, like thin sweet wine, into a condition that is saved from insipidity only by its tartness. But God forbid we should present this picture as the type of a class. Far otherwise. There are unwedded women, not a few, who, though they have outlived their youth, have not outlived a beauty that fades not with the bloom on the cheek or the light of youth in the eye. There are those whose Christian cheerfulness and good sense, whose ready sympathy and serviceableness, whose equanimity and helpfulness and hopefulness, render them universal favourites."—*Principal Caird.*



it is possible, as we tried to show in a former book, to be happy though married, almost as much might be said on the possibility of single blessedness.

People may admire the marriage state, and yet have their own good reasons for not entering it. Under the dying pillow of Washington Irving there were found a lock of

¹ The author is indebted to Messrs. Cassell for the use of title and part of this chapter, which first appeared in their Magazine.

hair and a miniature. Who will say that a man or woman ought to marry who treasures up such memorials, and thinks of all that might have been? Some have never found their other selves, or circumstances prevented the junction of these selves. And which is more honourable, a life of loneliness or a loveless marriage? There are others who have laid down their hopes of wedded bliss for the sake of accomplishing some good work, or for the sake of a father, mother, sister, or brother. In such cases celibacy is an honourable, and maybe a praiseworthy, state.

As there are 500,000 more women than men in England, it is obviously impossible that every woman should have a husband. Are all the women who cannot get married superfluous? Certainly not. There are plenty of superfluous women, and of superfluous men also. But you will not always find them among the unmarried. *They* are superfluous women who give themselves to idle pleasure and morbid fancy, and despise the activities of the age into which they are born; who are so lacking in principle that they will accept any man in marriage—an octogenarian, an imbecile, or a rake—if his establishment be satisfactory; who, anchored in the haven of a husband's love, and surrounded by the evidences of his practical thoughtfulness, become steeped in selfishness, and make their whole life a hot pursuit of folly and fashion, interested only in the whim of the hour. Let the estimate of woman be changed, so that she may be valued for what she is in herself. If she be worthless as woman, she will be worthless as wife and mother. Let her training be such that, whether married or single, she shall have character, ability to

stand alone, with value in herself. Then will she enrich society, and whether wife, mother, or celibate, she will, in no true sense of the word, ever become a "superfluous woman."

Many a girl looks on marriage as a vocation, who has never thought of the duties it involves; and I think for a woman to fail to make and keep a home happy is to be a "failure" in a truer sense than to have failed to catch a husband. If some of their married sisters make old maids the subject of ridicule, these "unappropriated blessings" may well ask, Is it not better to be laughed at for not being married than never to be able to laugh because you are married? An Irish magistrate on one occasion asked a prisoner before him if he were married. "No." "Then," replied the magistrate, "it's a fine thing for your wife."

Nobody ever calls the happy-faced, sweet-voiced, generous single woman an old maid, nor is the epithet bestowed upon her if she is a business woman, at the head of a commercial house, or the superintendent of a school. Much of the work which makes the world better and happier is done by single women. It is done quietly, and often in secret, for women, more frequently than men, heed Charles Dickens's advice to the pupils of a school in America: "Boys, do all the good you can, and make no fuss about it." What a noble list of spinsters' names could be given: Hannah More and her five unmarried sisters, Florence Nightingale, Mary Carpenter, Emily Faithful, and the hundreds headed by Miss Octavia Hill, who are bringing light and leading to the dim millions in London and other great cities.

Who does not know "old maids" who are the light and the

stay of homes darkened by sorrow and tottering by the strokes of affliction? "Auntie" is respected and beloved by her nephews and nieces, for she has ceased to think of her own happiness, and is always planning for the good of others. She is not soured by celibacy, but sheds upon all who come in her way the sweetness of good temper and the light of practical wisdom. She has not a home of her own, but, as Wesley did, she takes the world for her parish, and becomes the neighbour of every one who needs her help. Can a life be anything but beautiful which is lived—as are the lives of many unmarried women—in the spirit of these lines?—

" Question not, but live and labour,
Till your goal be won ;
Helping every feeble neighbour,
Seeking help from none.
Life is mostly froth and bubble ;
Two things stand like stone—
Kindness in another's trouble,
Courage in your own."

The lives of many unmarried people are unhappy because they have failed to find an object in life ; but when they are more fortunate, their love and powers may be drawn out quite as much as those of the married, by interesting work. They are married to some art or utility, or instead of loving one they love all. When this last is the case, they go down into the haunts of evil, seek out the wretched, and spare neither themselves nor their money in their praiseworthy enthusiasm for humanity. Employment is a "perennial fire-proof joy" that will always make people happy though single. If celibacy be an evil, remember what Jean Paul says of evil, that it is "like

a nightmare : the instant you begin to *stir* yourself it is already gone."

No doubt it is difficult to find the work we like, but then the work we like is seldom the best for us. Those who prefer any honest work to no work need never be idle. We had better be content with the work given us which we are able to do, and perform it faithfully, than vainly wish for something beyond our reach, which we would not be able, perhaps, properly to perform. The more God empties our hands of other work, the more we may know He has special work to give them.

"No man is born into the world whose work
Is not born with him ; there is always work,
And tools to work withal, for those who will ;
And blessed are the horny hands of toil."

Judging from the number of unemployed single women to be met with, one is sometimes inclined to think that these lines are true of man only, and not of woman ; but it is not so.

In winding up his story of *Kavanagh*, Longfellow says that Miss Amelia Hawkins remained unmarried, "though possessing a talent for matrimony which amounted almost to genius." It has been my good fortune to know several contented and useful unmarried women who possessed "a talent for matrimony which amounted almost to genius." Their lives were devoted to teaching, nursing the sick, parish work, or to some kind of "mothering," whether of children or afflicted grown-up people. Indeed, I believe that as a rule the women who make the best of unmarried life are those who would have made the best wives and mothers, had it been their lot to marry. Love

comes into every woman's life, and though it may not end in wedded happiness, it transmutes all it touches into gold. It is those who have loved and lost, or who have loved the unattainable, or, it may be, who have loved and of their own free will renounced the object of their affections, who learn the abnegation of self that enables them to spend and be spent in the service of others.

"Love took up the harp of Life, and smote on all the chords with might ;
Smote the chord of Self, that, trembling, passed in music out of sight."

There is a stage of bitter suffering, of darkness that may be felt, and then "the resurrection of the heart," and a life of self-denying usefulness, follow. Every woman can do something if she chooses, in practical or directly philanthropic work, if not in the sphere of art. The great point is, not to let the nature centre in itself, but to send forth sympathies into the lives of others. To the share of the single woman falls all the woman's work in the world which the duties and position of the wife and mother must and ought to prevent their taking in hand, unless it is in very exceptional cases. Motherhood is, indeed, a part of every true woman's nature, whether she is married or single, and this is what makes the thoughtful, Christian single woman's heart a refuge for all the weary and lonely ; this is what makes her gentle hands so strong to raise the fallen.

At the same time the single woman spoils others and is unjust to herself when she allows it to be thought that she is a drudge, on whose shoulders may be laid all the unpleasant, uninteresting work that some one has to do, but which every

one, if possible, leaves undone. She should choose her own arena of work and dedicate her talents and energy to it.

The "spinster's sweet arts" are unselfishness, good temper, tact, and taste. Live for others. You have no idea of the value of kindness. Pleasure is very reflective, and if you give it you feel it, and pleasure which you give by a little kindness of manner returns to you with compound interest. Sometimes the single woman fails to please because she neglects her dress and appearance, and forgets that she is just as much bound as a married one to be sweet and gracious in her ways, and looks, and words. The result is that she is spoken of with dislike and looked upon as a sort of social excrescence. A harsh-voiced, abrupt-mannered, unwomanly woman, who affects in dress, and tone, and bearing as far as may be to imitate a man, will never gain the sweet and queenly sovereignty of influence, which is one of womanhood's best prerogatives, and which the single woman has opportunities of exercising more than any of her sex.

In an old number of the *Girl's Own Paper* I have come across a letter in which "A Happy Young Wife," while thanking the editor for "a good husband and a comfortable home," shows very sensibly how not to sink down into a disagreeable, cantankerous old maid. She says :

"DEAR MR. EDITOR,—When the *Girl's Own Paper* first appeared three years ago I was twenty-five, and never had received an offer of marriage. As I had always been taught to consider that woman's first duty was to marry, you may suppose I was in rather a melancholy and discontented state of

mind, but thanks to my dear *Girl's Own Paper*, both from tales, articles, and most of all from the 'Answers to Correspondents,' I learnt differently, and tried by God's blessing to fill my life with work for Him. I took up French, music, &c., which I had sadly neglected, asked for and got a district, and determined by God's help if I were to be an old maid I would at least be a contented one and make others happy. You cannot imagine how your paper comforted and sustained me in my resolution. I had quite left off thinking of the possibility of marriage for myself, when I was electrified by receiving a proposal from a gentleman much my superior. He tells me how that he was first attracted to me by the bright, contented expression of my face and total lack of self-consciousness. So you see, dear Mr. Editor, I have indeed great cause to be truly grateful to the *Girl's Own Paper*, for most probably, had it not been for its teaching, I should never have taken a higher view of life, never striven to make the world a wee bit better, but always have kept my discontented look, and as I am very plain, perhaps sunk down to be a disagreeable, cantankerous old maid. Pray accept the thanks of

A HAPPY YOUNG WIFE."

I am indebted to the same paper for the two following portraits: "There is a type, sad to look upon, but only too familiar to English boarding-houses and continental hotels, of the lonely, self-centred woman. She has been educated up to the standard of her youth, but has long since lost all interest in literature or art. She may possibly take some interest in politics, but, if so, it is probably of an acrid and bitter kind,

contemptuous of argument. Her favourite subject of conversation is the defective character of her surroundings, and you innocently wonder why she should remain in a place so full of drawbacks ; but wherever she went, it would be the same ! The best seat in the drawing-room, the comforts of the table, are matters of eager pursuit and thought with her ; and any attempt to defraud her of what she considers her due in these matters is a bitter wrong in her estimation. She is fairly well-to-do, but woe be to the innkeeper or the foreign guide who demands a sou beyond his legal right ! In Switzerland she will become excited if her coffee is cold ! but glorious scenery never stirs her to enthusiasm, though she "does" the excursions as a matter of course. She has relatives of whom she occasionally speaks, but they appear to regard her with but a tepid interest, and to be satisfied she should remain at a distance. Poor, poor creature—arid, loveless, unattractive ! One is stirred to deepest pity at the spectacle, and an unthinking observer will remark, "This comes of leading a single life."

But does it ? Look upon the companion picture.

A woman, past the prime of life, with a face whose exquisite sweetness of expression is touched with sadness. A human face, it has been said, should be either a promise or a history. Hers is a history. On the serene brow, the earnest eyes, there rests a pathetic look, as if to say, "I have suffered ; yet, I have conquered." That face is always ready to break into a smile of answering gladness at the greeting of the young, or to bend its sympathetic kindness in response to some timid confidence. No one could fail to be helped, soothed, elevated by its influence."

There are, then, old maids *and* old maids. There is she who can only be compared to a stinging nettle, and she whose "sweet music softer falls than petals from blown roses on the grass." The former hates her married sisters and gets up quarrels between them and their husbands. She tells half-truths more poisonous than whole lies. "Oh, you haven't heard? Well, it's not for me to say." She does this sort of mischief not from ill-nature so much as because she is narrow in her interests and feelings. She has allowed herself to grow small and trifling in her aims and pursuits. She is self-absorbed if not selfish. They say she was a coquette in her youth, which accounts for her being now so staid and formal.

"Thus weathercocks, which for a while
Have turned about with every blast,
Grown old, and destitute of oil,
Rust to a point, and fix at last."

Very different is the noble old maid. She may not have an absorbing mission, but she fits into all companies, cements social relations, and is always desired. She does not talk too much, and her words are always kind. She draws out and makes the most of dull and shy people. She is gentle, ready, and helpful, and firm withal, in sickness or in any emergency. Her eyes "are homes of silent prayer," and she is truly religious, but she does not give tracts or talk much about religion. Yet sometimes she may say to a restless, impatient girl, "You know, my dear, I was once like you; I thought all the world was made for me; but now I see that it is better to be made for all the world. We cannot have what we want always, we must not think quite so much about ourselves and our pleasures - then they will come to us."



CHAPTER XX.

NURSES AND NURSING.

"We, who are mere visitors at the hospitals, seeing all things so neat, clean, and orderly, and the sisters looking so charming in their soft pretty dresses, and the wards decorated with fresh flowers, have little idea of the amount and character of the morning's work ere all is brought to such a condition of order and beauty."—"Hospitals" in *Sunday at Home*.

"It would be hard to find stronger evidence that the times we live in are better than the times past, than that young ladies of good social position give themselves to the work of nursing the sick poor."—*Speech of Sir James Paget*.



IF there is one thing more than another for which women have a talent, it is for nursing; but, without proper training, this very instinct may urge them to do things which science and experience say had better be left undone, and to leave undone things which should be done. The standard of nursing is rising yearly, and now no woman, however well she may be adapted to it naturally, is considered capable of filling the onerous and responsible position of a professional

nurse until she has gone through a course of systematic teaching. That many think they have a taste for nursing who are not suited to it is proved by the fact that more than half of those who enter on the work leave at the end of the trial month, which, according to a rule laid down at nearly all the hospitals, a nurse must go through before her name is entered upon the register.

Training may be obtained by paying an annual amount at one of the hospitals that offer it, or by entering as a probationer, receiving small wages from the first, and being under agreement to remain for a certain term of years. After medical, surgical, obstetric, and other training, the probationer becomes a ward-nurse. From these ward-nurses in some hospitals the Sisters, or heads of wards, are chosen; but, generally, the Sisters (there is no religious significance in the name) are of superior education, and are taken from probationers of a higher social class. They superintend the nurses, probationers, and ward-maids.

To be a good nurse is to be, in the best sense of the word, an accomplished woman. Patience, perseverance, tenderness, self-control, courage, good temper, cheerfulness, a habit of self-forgetfulness and of ready obedience—these are some of the moral qualities that she possesses. Decision, clear judgment, tact, common sense are also required, and a nurse is all the better for having a sense of humour. It is needless to say that she ought to have good sight, good hearing, good nerves, and good health generally.

A lady of great and varied experience, in summing up her views on hospital nursing, remarked that important as health,

cleverness, and capability were, still more important, she said, is *character*. A Sister especially may be a good nurse, may please her doctors, may have her wards in admirable order, but there may be lacking that influence of truthfulness, loyalty, feminine reserve—in one word, of womanly character—that will, in the eyes of a judicious matron, make her wards, though admirably nursed, quite unfit for a training school for the probationers whom she wishes to grow up into nurses as they should be.

To undertake the tremendous responsibility of nursing the sick, and not to feel it, would show indifference or hardness disqualifying for the work. Considering how very much, humanly speaking, the issues of life and death in hospitals depend upon the attention, activity, knowledge, and watchfulness of the attendants, it is wonderful that any woman without a clear call should venture to undertake the work of a nurse. But what is a clear call? it may be asked. It takes two things to make a true calling to any office in life—namely, impulse and possibility. Many good women have felt strong impulses to devote themselves to nursing, but the possibility has not been open to them. Health, or family ties, or other circumstances had to be weighed in the balance against the impulse, and decided that the call was not really given. But when an impulse is given, and then a door is opened for its development in life, it may be accepted as a definite call, and God never calls us to a duty or a responsibility without giving to us daily strength for our daily need.

From whatever social class a probationer comes, during the first year of training she will have to do all kinds of hard,

uninteresting, and often very disgusting work ; so the sooner her views about nursing become real, and her lily fingers grow accustomed to what is called menial work, the better. The hours are long, and in some hospitals enough time is not given for meals and for exercise in the open air.

I have heard a sister say that in the great hospital where she was trained she was often so weary washing dirty patients on coming in, or cleaning all kinds of utensils required for nursing, that she had to sit down and cry.

It should be a great comfort to the lady probationer who has work like this to do to think of Him who was amongst men as one that serveth. It was dirty work, certainly, washing the feet of ungrateful Judas, when our Lord knew that on the day following He would be betrayed by him ; and yet surely it was the divinest. It is Belial's lady, and not Christ's, who wants work that has "nothing menial in it." Christ's lady knows that she is a prime minister, or first servant, in His kingdom, who does the hardest, roughest, and most useful work for his brothers and sisters. "He that is greatest among you shall be your servant." Be sure that no work a probationer can be put to is so dirty as that of fine ladies who take Belial's gift of miserable idleness ; live on the labour and shame of others ; and deceive themselves by lies about Providence, until they perish, shrieking the bitter cry, "When saw we *Thee* ? "

I know an old bachelor doctor, who says that the only woman worth marrying is a nursing sister ; and, indeed, the qualities needed to make a good mistress of a household are essential for a good head of a ward. Thought for others, method, cleanliness, forethought, readiness to bear the brunt

of the unexpected, and to make the best of things—these and other qualities which make a woman the centre of order in a household are equally necessary in a nursing sister. The sweetest home virtues are just those which make a woman valuable in a hospital. Any knowledge of housekeeping that a sister may have will be useful; and if she has had no experience of such matters in the past, she cannot too soon remedy this great deficiency in her education.

An unpunctual nurse may cause the death of a patient by neglecting to administer the prescribed medicine or stimulants at the right time. If the case be critical, the nurse should write down the doctor's orders, lest any detail be forgotten. Perfect truthfulness and accuracy there must be if the doctors are to continue to rely upon her reports. I am sorry to say that I have known even sisters who were not quite as clean and neat in their persons and habits as their patients and fellow sisters could have desired. Such selfish disregard of little things, which in their total result are by no means unimportant, bring discredit upon the whole profession, and diminish its usefulness. Particular care should be taken to serve meals with dainty cleanliness. A nurse should be pitiful and courteous, for her patients are much in her power, and may be made to suffer unnecessarily by a sharp way of speaking, a rough touch, or a grumbling attendance upon them. If a soft voice, and boots that do not creak, are excellent things in all women, this is particularly the case in nurses. They require a voice of velvet and a will of steel. At the same time they should remember that whispering and conversing in low tones are practices to be avoided. A low but natural tone of voice is best.

There are many kinds of nurses—private, district, work-house, army, navy, and several others. Nursing the sick poor in their own homes is the most difficult, and certainly not the least useful kind of work that can be undertaken for suffering humanity. The relations and friends of the poor may be willing enough to help in time of sickness, but they have not the time; and if they had, their ignorance would render their services almost useless. When serious illness breaks out in the house of a day labourer, the scene is confusion—worse confounded; and the arrival of a member of a sick poor nursing association is that of a ministering angel. As the sister walks through the streets to the houses where her help is so much required, in a black uniform bonnet, cloak, and dress, people may have wondered that a lady, young and well adapted to the enjoyment of life, should forego the delights of pretty dressing, and the pleasures which many make the business of their lives; but she has her reward in the homes of the poor, where her presence brings sunshine, and her costume seems most beautiful. Not only does the nurse see to the personal comfort of the patient, but when no other help is at hand she cleans the grate, lights the fire, and puts the room in nursing order herself. The following account, taken from the annual report of a Nursing Association, will give some little idea of her task. There died last year, after weeks of tender nursing, an old man of eighty-two. What his earlier life had been I do not know. Let us hope that, like most of us, he had had some little success, some little sunshine, some little happiness during that long period; but, at any rate, he found himself at the end of his life, poor, sick, and solitary.

For some cause or other he became the butt of the lively urchins of his neighbourhood, who, boy like, employed their leisure moments in throwing names at their victim, and stones at his windows, until he found himself compelled to forego the daylight by keeping up the shutters, and stuffing their chinks with bundles of rags. Here, in perpetual night, he lay quite alone, helpless, upon a bed of sacks. "On first visiting the patient," says the report, "we were a long time before we could get admittance into the house, as there was no one at home to open the door; so we asked a boy who lived in the next house to climb over the wall and let us in. For a few minutes after we got into the room we could see nothing whatever; the room was in utter darkness, but the patient could see us as we stood in the open doorway, and cried out to us he was glad some human being had come to him at last. After lighting a candle we found we were in a very small, crowded room, and in the corner, crouched upon an old chair bedstead, was a poor old man. We first kindled a fire, and while the water was getting hot, took up the sacks and shook them, swept the room, and cleared up a whole bucketful of ashes from the fireplace. We afterwards washed the patient dressed his wounds, and made the bed, which had neither sheets nor blankets. We made him a cup of tea, cut him a little bread and butter from his scanty store, and left him, as he said, quite happy. Every morning we washed the patient, made the bed, generally swept the room, lighted the fire, and prepared a meal."

The profound ignorance existing among the people as to the nature of disease, and the remedies to be taken, is typified in

the case of an old woman who is still on the nursing list. She, suffering from dropsy, imagined that to lie down would prove immediately fatal to her, and so for nine months or more she sat on the edge of the bed, merely taking what rest she could by leaning up against the head-board. She likewise objected to be washed, firmly believing that two waters meeting, as she expressed it, must result in instant death. It required a great deal of persuasion on the part of the nurses to bring about a better state of things.

Very numerous are the letters received by the Association thanking nurses for their services. Here is one from a poor working mother, whose children were successfully won back to health :

“DEAR NURSE,—I am very glad you are coming to nurse my little boy. I can go to my work now light-hearted and happy, knowing that he will have every care taken of him. I am so grateful to you I cannot express my feelings ; this I know, that God will reward you for all your kindness to my children. I don't forget how tenderly you nursed them when four of them were so very ill in the fever fifteen months ago ; and were I myself ill to-morrow, I should crave for you to nurse me. In all weathers you came night and morning to my little ones. God bless you.—I am, yours very gratefully, G.”

It is the experience of Miss Nightingale, and all who understand the subject, that nursing in the homes of the poor to be effectual must be done, not by paid nurses of the servant class, but by gentlewomen. Nurses of the servant class would

not, as a rule, undertake to remove dirt without proper appliances, of which many of the houses are destitute. "There's nothing to clean with," they would say when it was suggested to them to freshen the patient's room. Wherever a nurse enters, order and cleanliness must enter with her. She must reform and recreate, as it were, the homes of the sick poor. These results can only be attained by one who is content to be servant and teacher by turns, and who has the tact needed to command the patient's entire confidence. In short, a woman of a higher stamp than will suffice for most other kinds of work is indispensable here. A woman with a badly diseased leg, who has been suffering agony from the mistaken treatment of a parish nurse, said, after the first visits of the district lady nurses, "Oh, what a different place you have made my room, and how comfortable you have made me! The first night after you came I hardly knew myself for the ease I was in, after having been made mad with the pains for so many nights. And as to what you have done to the room—why, I just hope I'll be able *to keep it the same* when I get about again."

Many women of independent means, who have not had to take to nursing as a bread-winning profession, are now engaged as nurses at hospitals and in the houses of the poor. Indeed, every woman, no matter what her circumstances are, would be all the better for six, or even three, months of nursing experience, which, for a very small sum, may be obtained at several hospitals. She would be much more capable of doing good work at home or in a district or parish. A girl's education is supposed to be incomplete without finishing lessons in music, drawing, and other accomplishments; but we think

that a course of hospital nursing is a much more useful, and even beautiful, kind of "finishing." Besides, parents never know when their daughters may have to earn their bread, so they will feel more comfortable about them if they have given them a profession so much in request as that of nursing. If they shrink from exposing their daughters to the sights they may see and knowledge they may gain in a hospital ward, they should reflect that it is better for them, at a fit age, to learn the truths of life by the rightful channels of scientific knowledge and active usefulness, rather than by the less innocent method of attempting to gratify idle curiosity. After a certain age ignorance is not innocence, and we are of those who believe that if a woman learns at a hospital the terrible laws of God against sin, the inevitable consequences that follow disobedience to the laws of health, she will think more gravely before she undertakes the duties of wife and mother, but she will not fulfil them the less earnestly and nobly.

An eminent surgeon relates the following:—"When I was house-surgeon I once came upon a 'probationer' standing in a pantry sobbing bitterly. 'Was she overtired,' I asked, 'or home-sick? or had anything made her nervous?' 'N-no, she whimpered; 'but I never thought that nursing meant I should have to touch people's sore legs!' No woman—nor man either—should enter any vocation unprepared to do whatsoever the hand findeth to do there."

Floating through the heads of many girls is an ideal of nursing which is poetical rather than practical. Nursing is not all Eau-de-Cologne, flowers, soft, ethereal robes, and grateful invalids. Patients should sometimes be called anything but

that. They are often impatient, and as unreasonable and petulant as children. One who has had experience thus writes concerning the slight things that disturb and annoy the sick:—"Once, when I was quite young, I had charge of a dear sister who was very ill indeed. Thinking her asleep, I sat down by a desk in her chamber to write some letters. Presently something like a moan of despair reached my ears from her bed. 'What is it?' I hastened to ask. 'Oh, M.,' she answered, 'the scratching of your pen is putting me in agony.' A friend told me that, during convalescence after a fever, he was nearly distracted by seeing his nurse sitting near him with sewing in her hand. The regularly recurring movement of the needle and thread, and the whirring of the thread through the cloth, caused his supersensitive nerves acute misery."

Before undertaking the work of nursing, girls should try to realize what nursing really means, and ask themselves have they the qualifications necessary. They will understand the matter better if they read the following words of advice from a memorandum issued by the Committee of the Nightingale Fund on the special qualifications needful for lady probationers. I think they cannot be too carefully studied by all intending nurses. It says: "We want gentlewomen who come with a settled purpose to the work, free from all affectation and romance, but yet not wanting in some genuine enthusiasm. The more knowledge they have of practical household management the better. Ready to make sacrifices without thinking themselves self-sacrificing. They must come prepared for much disagreeable work consequent on all sick-nursing. As

in all else, so in nursing, a woman's influence must work quietly, not be self-asserting. It must be the influence of her life, not of mere words. Good women are indeed wanted for this work, but especially gentlewomen of sound health, firm purpose, cultivated minds, practical; apt to learn, willing to obey. When the time comes able to organize and rule with an eye to the good of the cause, in sympathy with those over as well as those under them; large-minded, large-hearted; who are conscious that they were sent into the world for something more than the pursuit of their own gratification, and who feel life is not worth living unless they strive to make the world something better for their having lived in it."

Compare with this Florence Nightingale's own opinion of what a nurse should be.

"1. She must be chaste in the sense of the Sermon on the Mount. It should be quite impossible for the most unchaste person to utter even an immodest jest in her presence.

"2. She must be sober in spirit as well as in drink, and temperate in all things.

"3. Honest, not accepting the most trifling fee or bribe from patients or their friends.

"4. Truthful, which includes memory to remember truly, and power of expression to tell truly what has been observed.

"5. Trustworthy to carry out directions intelligently and perfectly unseen as well as seen.

"6. Punctual to a second and orderly to a hair.

"7. Quiet, yet quick; quick, without hurry; gentle, without slowness; discreet, without self-importance.

"8. Cheerful and hopeful, not allowing either herself or patient to be discouraged.

"9. Cleanly to the point of exquisiteness.

"10. Self-forgetting, but thinking always of her patients.

"11. Kind, but never emotional."

It is evident that not every woman is fit for the high calling of a nurse.

"So kind, so duteous, diligent,
So tender over his occasions, true.
So feat, so nurse-like.

Ask God to give thee skill in comfort's art
That thou mayst consecrated be and set apart
Unto a life of sympathy ;
For heavy is the weight of woe in every heart,
And comforters are needed much of Christ-like touch.





CHAPTER XXI.

MILITARY NURSING SISTERS.

“Low voices with the ministering hand
Hung round the sick. . . . With angel offices,
Like creatures native unto gracious acts,
. . . . a medium in themselves.

To wile the length from languorous hours, and draw
The sting from pain.”—*Tennyson*.



WE have all read or heard of “The Woman in White,” but I am now going to say a few words about a woman in grey. If you were in the neighbourhood of the Royal Victoria Hospital, Netley, near Southampton, you would see her taking her daily walks, when not on duty, in a grey woollen gown, grey cloak, and grey bonnet. If, curious to see the inside of our palatial military hospital, you walked through one of the long corridors, you would see going out of and into the wards several women in grey dresses, white aprons, and white caps. You would notice at once the little scarlet capes on

MILITARY NURSING SISTERS.

their shoulders, and the neat white linen cuffs and collars, last mentioned much resembling those worn by public school boys. These are military nursing sisters, whom I, in my capacity of chaplain at this great military hospital, know well and see at almost all hours.

And to know them is to respect them and their work. The soldiers whether they would rather be nursed by medical staff orderlies or by sisters, and, after recovering from surprise at the simplicity of the question, they will tell you that there is no comparison; that the sisters have feeling, and understand what nursing means, and that, however well they may be, men cannot nurse the sick like women. I have just been visiting a man recovering from diphtheria, who, under God, owes his life to the painstaking devotion of the nursing sisters who nursed him. He was so weak, that the slightest mistake about the nourishment that was ordered would have brought his case to a fatal ending.

In a hospital where there are sisters, the patient gets his medicine in the proper quantities and at the right hour, and cannot throw it behind the fire, for a sister stands by until he has drunk every drop. Extras and medical comforts are given by the sisters at the right time, and to the men who have received them. In the sisters' scullery, puddings and other little dishes are so nicely cooked, that they must indeed astonish the poor patient.

It is hardly in woman's nature to wish to be less ornamental but she always wishes to be as useful as possible, and it is the credit of some of my nursing sister friends in the army that they complain of having too little to do. "The orderlies

say they, "do the hard, rough work, and soldiers, even when sick, are accustomed to help themselves, so that there is not as much for us to do as there used to be when we were being trained in a civilian hospital."

But for one sister who regrets that she entered military service, there are hundreds of women most anxious to do so, if they could get appointed, but an appointment is not easily got. During the past two years sisters have been sent to all our large station hospitals at home, and to foreign garrisons, so that only an occasional one will now be required to fill vacancies as they occur. There are at present about a hundred sisters at work in the army. Here at Netley there are now seventeen, but the proper number is twelve, and the others are only awaiting orders to go elsewhere.

There are several reasons why appointments as military nursing sisters should be sought for by so many. Sentimental young ladies fancy that they will at once become Florence Nightingales if they don grey dresses and little red capes, and that there is something especially interesting, if not poetical, about sick soldiers. A much more sensible reason for wishing to join the service is, because it affords a tolerably comfortable livelihood. The pay is not much—not, perhaps, as much as it ought to be—being £30 the first year, with an increase of £2 a year up to £50. On promotion to the rank of superintending sister the salary is £50 per annum. Their pay may, however, be considered by the sisters almost as pocket money, or can be given to friends, or may in part be used to buy an annuity, for they are provided with free board and lodging, and with nearly every article of their uniform. There is also a

weekly allowance of 1s. 6d. each for washing, and they have one or more servants to wait upon them. The not very large pension of £30 per annum is given to a sister on retiring, which she must do at sixty years of age. Each year abroad counts as two at home. Then there are also possibilities of promotion to be considered. Here at Netley and at the Herbert Hospital, Woolwich, there is a lady superintendent. At the former place she receives £250 per annum, at Woolwich from £150 to £200, exclusive of allowances. I believe there are only the names of three women mentioned in the official army list of officers. The Queen comes first as head of the army, and Mrs. Deeble at Netley, and Miss Caulfield at Woolwich, are recorded at the end of the names of the Medical Staff Corps as being lady superintendents of nurses.

In order to become a military sister it is necessary to go through a year's training in a civilian hospital. Then, if the certificates and recommendations (information as to these is sent on application to the Director-General Medical Staff Corps, War Office) of the applicant are satisfactory, and her services are required, she is sent here to Netley on probation for six months. The limits of age are between twenty-five and thirty-five. Talking of age, it is amusing to hear the sisters calling themselves "seniors," and saying with pride that they are senior to So-and-So. I did not know, before meeting these sisters, that women ever desired to be considered senior.

Very great care has to be exercised in the appointment of sisters. It is not enough that they should be well trained, and should understand the work. They ought to be gentlewomen in the best sense of that word, for no one can see and feel any



CHAPTER XXII.

DAUGHTERS AND SISTERS.

"Shall we not see these daughters and these sisters?"

—*Shakespeare's "King Lear,"* v. 3.



HAPPY thought—a vocation!—*Eva*: "I suppose those extremely nice-looking young men are the students, or house surgeons, or something." *Maud*: "No doubt. Do you know, Eva, I feel I should very much like to be a hospital nurse." *Eva*: "How strange! Why the very same idea has just occurred to me." In this way Mr. *Punch* lately ridiculed the rather mixed motives which sometimes induce ladies to become nursing sisters. Anything to get out of the humdrum round of commonplace duty into a more "interesting" sphere. To be a nursing sister is considered more heroic than to be a good-natural sister, and there is nothing sensational or exciting in being a good daughter.

And yet we should never go out of our way to look for

duties, but should start with what lies nearest. Try first of all, then, to be good daughters and loving sisters. Even the smallest gracious word or act, or only a smile, is by no means to be regarded as a trifle. "May I be cut into ten thousand triangles," said an American young lady, "if I do not know more about everything than my mother ever did!" English girls may not express themselves as plainly about their own superior enlightenment, but some of them believe quite as strongly that it exists. Unfilial feeling, and even insubordination, is too common amongst our girls. In this respect they are, unhappily for themselves, very unlike Mrs. Carlyle, of whom her husband thus wrote: "Obedience to her parents, unquestioning and absolute, lay at the foundation of her life. She was accustomed to say that this habit of obedience to her parents was her salvation through life—that she owed all that was of value in her character to this habit as the foundation."

Every woman who forms part of a home circle has a mission—a mission of cheerful helping, of loving, cheery sympathy with all the little worries and disappointments of daily life, as well as with the greater cares and the bitter heartaches which are only too likely to come. Give up now and then a pleasure, because mother would be lonely without you, or father, perhaps, would like a little music in the evening. Remember always how much you owe your father, whose busy love is occupied all day in providing for your wants, often with an aching head and an anxious heart. You should make home very bright for him.

The appearance of a daughter and not a son as the first-born of the Queen seems to have caused a little natural dis-

appointment to the father and mother as well as to the people of England. Prince Albert wrote to his father at Coburg, saying, "I should certainly have liked it better if it had been a son, as would Victoria also." But he added, "The little one is very well and very merry." We are told that when the firing of the guns announced the event to the city of London, the common remark was, "Only a girl!" In the case of a royal birth, where the affairs of a kingdom are more in the public view than those of the home and the family into which the little stranger has come, this feeling may be expected. But for our part we think that when questions of property or position are not concerned, it is usually the best thing for the family that the first-born should be a girl. How often we see the eldest daughter proving a true help to her parents, and exerting the influence of a good angel in the home! It is very seldom that we have sympathy, at any time of life, with this expression, "Only a girl."

Girls are often impatient because they cannot go out into the world and earn money; but a sister or a daughter may be as good as gold herself, and render service which no amount of gold could purchase. You have nothing to give to the family treasury in the way of money, but you can give an hour of patient care to your little baby sister who is cutting her teeth. You can give a string and a crooked pin and good advice to the three-year-old brother who wants to play at fishing. You can do something to help Mary, the old cook, or attend to the door while Ellen, the parlourmaid, goes home for a few hours to see her sick mother. You can dress yourself so neatly, and look so bright and kind and obliging, that you

will give your mother a thrill of pleasure whenever she catches sight of your young, pleasant face. You can write a letter to your father when he is absent on business, in which you can put all the news he wants in such a frank, artless way, that he will thank his daughter in his heart. You can give patient attention to a long, tiresome story by your grandmother, though you have heard it many times before. You can laugh just at the right time, and, when it is ended, make the old lady happy by a good-night kiss.

‘Nor serve we only when we gird
Our hearts for special ministry ;
That creature best has ministered
Which is what it was meant to be.

Birds by being glad their Maker bless,
By simply shining sun and stars ;
And we, whose law is love, serve less
By what we do than what we are.”

The three daughters of an Eastern lady were invited to furnish her with the proof of their love before she went a long journey from home. One brought her a marble tablet, with the inscription of her name ; another brought a garland of sweet, fragrant flowers ; while the third entered her presence, and said, “Mother, I have brought neither marble nor flowers—I have neither ; but I have a heart, and here your name is engraved—your memory is precious. This heart, full of affection, will follow you wherever you travel, and remain with you wherever you go.”

This last gift is the best that any daughter can give to her father and mother. Even if she do not earn a penny of coin,

she who gives this fully remunerates for all that is expended upon her. She pays her way by filling in the little spaces in home life, as only a dear daughter can, by lifting the weight of care from her mother, and by slipping in a soft word or a smile, where it is like oil on the troubled waters of a father's spirit. What better remuneration can a father have for his expenditure upon his daughters than their laughter, good humour, and sympathy? "The laughter of girls," says De Quincey, "is, and ever was, among the delightful sounds of earth," and most fathers will agree with me that their grief-dispelling wiles are far better than gold and silver. How could Sir Thomas More have sustained his sorrows and trials without his noble daughter Margaret Roper? After his death she obtained possession of his head, but not until it had been exposed on London Bridge; and, after keeping it all her life, had it laid upon her bosom when dead, and buried with her.

Mr. H. Crabb Robinson relates that a young lady, the daughter of a country clergyman, was so powerfully affected by the perusal of *Corinne* and *Delphine*, that when Madame de Staël, the authoress of these works, came to London, the young lady called upon her, threw herself at her feet, and prayed to serve her as an attendant or amanuensis. The baroness very kindly, but decidedly, remonstrated with her on the folly of her conduct: "You may think," she said, "that it is an enviable lot to travel over Europe, and see all that is most beautiful and distinguished in the world; but the joys of home are more solid; domestic life affords more permanent happiness than any fame can give. You have a father: I have none. You have a home: I was led to travel because I was driven

from mine. Be content with your lot ; if you knew mine, you would not desire it." It is gratifying to add that the young lady went home cured ; she became steady and industrious, and lived a life of respectability and usefulness. If daughters would understand that the first duty of their lives is to increase the sunshine of home life, we would be less likely to hear a repetition of the pathetic cry recorded in the pages of *Punch* some years ago : " The world is hollow, and my doll is stuffed with bran, and I want to go into a convent ! "

However useful and comfortable they might be in a father's house, many girls seem now to think that there is no place like *away* from home, so they go into shops, post-offices, &c., and earn enough to enable them to stalk about in the hours they are not employed like independent ladies, aping the manners and ways of men. There are thousands upon thousands of girls who take their enjoyments wandering about the streets of London. Every penny they earn is spent in dress or something worse. A pretty training this for happy married homes !

Mrs. Manoverer says she possesses great resources in her dear daughters, only she had not yet been able to husband them. Whatever may be the case with mothers, fathers are seldom anxious to part with their daughters, and do not consider that the gaining of sons-in-law is a sufficient compensation, " It's a solemn thing, young man," said the broken-hearted father, " to come into the home of an old man and take away his only daughter, the light of the household, and the prop and solace of his declining years. But you have my blessing, and I wish you every joy and—— " " But I won't take her away, sir," interrupted the young man, inexpressibly affected. " We'll both stay with you."

Sisters can do a great deal of good in their families by influencing their younger brothers and sisters. The little ones are far more free in talk and manner with them than they are with elder people, and so they have opportunities with them which do not belong even to their mothers. Sisters may also do much in the way of influencing their schoolboy brothers, and instilling into them reverence for womanhood. Do not be like some, who have little time to spare for the society of their brothers, who do not care to sing or play for them, and who count the cost of every gracious word and act spent in their own homes, but who are enthusiastic, charming, and beautiful when they meet gentlemen in the festive circle. Young men are exposed to many temptations. It is well for them if they have sisters whom they love and are proud of, and who can stand between them and evil. Be willing to resign that attractive book and play a duet with your elder brother. Try that childish game which your five-year-old brother thinks so fascinating, even though you have to leave aside your letter-writing for a few moments. He is growing older every day, and these are golden years when you can knit his soul to yours by silken cords which will never lose their strength. "So you are to be married?" questioned a cynical young man. "Yes, very soon." "Of course you think her an angel?" "Oh, no; I have four sisters!"

Brothers, as a rule, expect a good deal from sisters, and do not care to do much for the sisters in return. It is suggested, however, that the sisters have been to some extent wasting their energies in a wrong direction. If, instead of allowing themselves to be mere fetchers and carriers for their brothers,

sisters were to lay themselves out to make the home more attractive, specially considering the idiosyncrasies of the brothers, then, it is anticipated, the house may be made by them a place in which the brothers shall look forward to spending the evening with nearly as much gratification as that with which lovers look for the hour that shall find them together ; and all the more if the girl who has a lover does not count her brother as a supernumerary. This is asking a great deal from sisters, but there can be no doubt that many clever and good-tempered girls could do more, if they liked, for their brothers ; and by doing more, they would vastly improve their brothers' character, would make the whole home more home-like, and all within it happier.

There have been, and there are now, almost as many famous sisters as famous wives—that is to say, sisters who have been instrumental in making their brothers useful, great, and famous. Out of many that might be named, let me mention two—Caroline Herschel and Dorothy Wordsworth. The grave of the latter is on the right of that of her brother, the poet, in the Grasmere churchyard, beneath a group of yew trees, and hard by a mountain stream. On the right side lies his faithful wife, and the resting-places of their children are close by. Pilgrims from all parts of the earth visit the little inclosure, and few among them probably know how much Wordsworth's poetry was influenced by his sister Dorothy. An anonymous writer in the *Spectator* has, however, summed it up charmingly in verse :

“Only a sister's part—yes, that was all ;
And yet her life was full and bright and free.

She did not feel, 'I give up all for him ;'
She only knew, ' 'Tis mine his friend to be.'

So what she saw and felt the poet sang—
She did not seek the world should know her share,
Her one great hunger was for 'William's' fame,
To give his thoughts a voice her life-long prayer."





CHAPTER XXIII.

TALK LESS AND SAY MORE.

"Be silent, or say something better than silence."—*Pythagoras.*

"The *drop* of one word may show more than the *stream* of a whole oration."—*Fuller.*



MAN who had foolishly ventured upon a verbal contest with his wife was met, as he was retiring from the scene, by his little son, who had just begun to study grammar. "Papa," said the child, "what part of speech is woman?" To which the father replied, "She isn't any part of speech at all, Georgy—she's the whole of it." If this be the case, a few words about talking cannot be out of place in a book for women. And what I shall say must not be considered at all unfriendly. "Does our talk disturb you?" asked one of a company of talkative ladies of an old gentleman sitting in a railway carriage the other afternoon. "No, ma'am," was the naïve reply; "I've

been married nigh on forty years." Unfortunately for myself, I have not been married half this time, but I can understand the old gentleman.

Here is what General Gordon, in his "Reflections in Palestine," says of the tongue, and specially of the tongue of woman: "The tongue is glib, serpent-like, and it is odd that women have it in such perfection, which none have ever doubted. It is their defence. The woman ate first, and the tongue is her particular forte. Yet when women speak good, how well they speak it out! They are in this point the salt of the earth."

"Nature, impartial in her ends,
When she made man the strongest,
In justice, then, to make amends,
Made woman's tongue the longest."

Most important of all a woman's accomplishments is the ability to maintain an intelligent, vivacious conversation with family, friends, and guests. A woman who is a good talker, and who can talk equally well whatever may be the character of her guests, is a blessing to the world. By nature all women are fitted to acquire this accomplishment. All women talk much; that all of them do not talk well is mainly the fault of those who have educated them. They have not been provided with subjects of conversation, and their minds have not been trained to that alertness and that catholicity of intellectual sympathy which are necessary conditions of conversational success in varied company. This need can and should be provided for in the education of girls.

Newspaper reading circles are being formed by the young

ladies of Chicago, in order to make themselves acquainted with and discuss the events of interest that are transpiring at home and abroad. The idea is a good one. The average young lady is blissfully ignorant of the events which so excite her father and her big brothers over the morning paper. It would do her a world of good to open up to her view a wider intellectual horizon, and to supply her with a longer list of topics of conversation. She would be more companionable to her partners of the other sex at the dinner-table and in the ball-room, who are often driven to their wits' end for something to say other than mere trivialities about the weather or the last new novel or play.

Especially ought girls to be encouraged to talk agreeably during meals. It is the natural meeting time, not only of the household, but of friends, and conversation is then as essential as food. Yet what is the habit of many of our schools? They either enforce silence at this period, or they compel the wretched pupils to speak in a foreign language, in which they can only labour out spasmodic commonplace, without any interchange or play of thought. One of the magazines lately offered a useful prize for the best suggested opening conversation on going down to dinner with a stranger. Of course the weather was excluded, nor would the remark which a man of my acquaintance used to make be likely to have won the prize. When at a loss for anything else to say, he would ask confidentially, "I don't mind being ugly, do you?"

The soul of conversation is sympathy. People should not talk to please themselves, but those that hear them. Take rather than give the tone of the company you are in. If you have

ability, you will show it more or less upon every subject ; and if you have not, you had better talk sillily upon a subject of other people's choosing than upon one of your own.

The two deadly sins of conversation are talkativeness and silence, the rest are what may be called venial offences. As a barrel-organ is to music, so is talkativeness to conversation.

Coleridge talked on for ever, and his hearers wished him to talk on for ever. We know women who sometimes seem to be bent upon doing the same without consulting the wishes of their hearers. The mere exercise of their tongues gives them a physical pleasure which they cannot resist. Flying off at a tangent from one trivial subject to another—about themselves, their children, their servants, their neighbours—they rattle on, in season and out of season, with, perhaps, untrained voices and no preparation whatever for talking well. Poor things, they cannot help it, for they have caught the disease of Chattering or Intemperate Speech concerning which Plutarch says : “Some faults are ridiculous, some odious, some dangerous ; but chattering is all three in one. We think ill of traitors, who for a great reward, or who, it may be, under strong torments, reveal secrets which have been confided to them ; but this chatterer is one who reveals them under no temptation, no compulsion at all. The drunkard babbles at his wine ; but the prattler doth it always and in every place, in the market, in the theatre, walking, sitting, by day, by night. Does he wait on the sick ? He is worse than the disease. Sailing with you, he is more unwelcome than the sea-sickness ; praising you, he is more distasteful than another who should blame. And, worst of all, his malady is incurable, or well-nigh incurable. He might be healed by wholesome

words, but all tongue, no ear, as he is, he never listens ; in his self-chosen deafness he hears nothing."

The stories related of some ladies who were afflicted with this malady are almost incredible. Lady Hester Stanhope is, perhaps, one of the most remarkable instances of a being under the necessity of eternally talking. Speech was as essential to her as breath. Her discourse was highly original, but it must have been a sore infliction. She seemed to forget that listeners to her anecdotes and remarks on human life might possibly require a temporary relief. "It may be alleged," says Dr. Meryon, "that nothing was more easy than to find excuses for breaking up a conversation ; but it was not so ; for her words ran on in such an uninterrupted stream that she could never seize a moment to make a pause. I have sat more than eight, ten—nay, twelve and thirteen—hours at a time !" One visitor was kept listening to Lady Hester from three in the afternoon till break of day next morning. Another was treated to a discourse of such length that he fainted away from fatigue and constraint. Her conversation was generally familiar and colloquial : sometimes sarcastic, sometimes rising to eloquence so noble and dignified that, like an overflowing river, it bore down everything before it. Her illustrations were drawn from all sources, and were always happy. Her reasoning was plain, and her language full of strength and energy. A spade with her was called a spade, and as for people who differed from her, she always described them in such polite terms as knaves, rogues, monsters, and jackasses. To such a condition may a woman come if she disregard the maxim, "There is a time when nothing should be said ; there is a time when something should be said ; but

there never is a time when everything should be said. 'Tis the fool only that uttereth all his mind." She has a long tongue which is even harder to control.

It is with narrow-souled people as with narrow-necked bottles—the less they have in them the more noise they make in pouring it out.

We would talk less and say more, and be less frivolous in our conversation if we made it a rule to think before speaking instead of afterwards. If two shorthand writers, placed behind a curtain, were to take down the conversation at a single afternoon tea, and publish it in the newspaper next morning, the talkers would see with shame an illustration of the truth of Pope's lines—

" Words are like leaves ; and where they most abound
Much fruit of sense beneath is rarely found."

It is recorded of good old Latimer, that, when examined before Bonner, at first he answered without much thought and care ; but presently, hearing the rustling of a pen behind the curtain, he perceived that they were taking down every word of his defence. Stopping, he thus apostrophized himself : " Oh Latimer, Latimer ! thy words are being put on record. Thou must take heed what thou art saying ! " Giddy and thoughtless talkers should sometimes reflect that their words are being put on record in God's book of remembrance.

If people never met except when they had something to say, and always separated when they had exhausted their pleasant or profitable topics, how delightful, but, alas, how brief, would be our social assemblages ! This ideal state of social intercourse

may never be realized, but there would be an approach to it if all women really desired it and would heartily co-operate.

“ At last the tea came up, and so
With that our tongues began to go.
Now in that house you’re sure of knowing
The smallest scrap of news that’s going.
We find it there the wisest way
To take some care of what we say.”

It would be well if some ladies we know would take warning by the confession of that great man who set down in one of his books, “ I never talked much at any one time in my life without saying something or other I was sorry for.” The talkative often do more harm, all unintentionally, than the wilfully false and malicious. We cannot go on very long talking for the mere sake of talking without doing some harm. Instead of confining ourselves to things and ideas about which conversation is generally more innocent, we shall go on to make remarks about people which will not always be kind or strictly truthful. It is almost impossible for talkative people to avoid gossip, which was amusingly described by the child who said : “ It’s when nobody don’t do nothing, and somebody goes and tells it.” Persons who are talkative about the business or faults —(virtues are never mentioned)—of their neighbours, should remember that “ a dog that will fetch will also carry ; and that those who bring to us an evil tale about others will probably carry away one about ourselves.” It is very easy to start false reports. Just because a woman, while buying a broom, wanted one with a heavy and strong handle, it was reported by all the

neighbours that she was in the habit of beating her husband. We have all been sadly amused by "The Autobiography of a Scandal," and reminded how true is the saying, "Of thy unspoken word thou art master ; thy spoken word is master of thee," and that we should be as careful of our words as of our actions ; and as far from speaking as from doing ill. "Janet McDougall, I have warned ye often ; ye are ower muckle given to scandal. Yemaun keep your mouth, as it were, wi' bit an' bridle, as the Scripture saith." "Aweel, meenister ; sae I hae always keepit a watch upon my tongue——" "Hoot, Janet, it maun hae been a repeater, then."

Hannah Moore had a good way of managing talebearers. It is said that whenever she was told anything derogatory of another, her invariable reply was, "Come, we will go and ask if this be true." The effect was sometimes ludicrously painful. The talebearer was taken aback, stammered out a qualification, or begged that no notice might be taken of the statement. But the good lady was inexorable ; off she took the scandal-monger to the scandalized, to make inquiry and compare accounts. It is not likely that anybody ever a second time ventured to repeat a gossip story to Hannah Moore.

A talkative French lady was showing a visitor the family portraits in a picture gallery. "That officer there in uniform," she said, "was my great-great-grandfather—he was as brave as a lion, but one of the most unfortunate of men. He never fought a battle in which he did not have an arm or a leg carried away." Then she added proudly : "He took part in twenty-four engagements." Doubtless this lady did not mean to insinuate that she was descended from a twenty-four legged

ancestor, but she allowed her tongue to run away with her, and so do many other people.

These and other sins of the tongue must have been in the mind of the mediæval monk, who, when asked by a peasant to teach him a psalm, chose that beginning with the verse, "I will take heed to my ways that I offend not with my tongue." Having learned thus much, the peasant went away, saying that he would try and practise it before going further ; but he never returned, not having succeeded in living up to the first verse. We are warned of the irrevocableness of the word which has once gone from us by the proverb which says, "Of thine unspoken word thou art master ; thy spoken word is master of thee." The story is well known of the lady who visited Philip Neri, accusing herself of being a slanderer. "Do you frequently fall into this fault ?" he inquired. "Yes, very often," replied the penitent. "My dear child," said Philip, "your fault is great, but the mercy of God is greater ; I now bid thee do as follows. Go to the nearest market and purchase a chicken just killed and still covered with feathers ; then walk to a certain distance, plucking the bird as you go. Your walk finished, return to me." The woman did as directed, and returned, anxious to know the meaning of so singular an injunction. "You have been very faithful to the first part of my orders," said Philip, "now do the second part and you will be cured. Retrace your steps, pass through all the places you have traversed, and gather up one by one all the feathers you have scattered." "But," said the woman, "I cast the feathers carelessly away, and the wind carried them in all directions." "Well, my child," replied Philip, "so is it with your words of

slander ; like the feathers which the wind has scattered, they have been wafted in many directions. Call them back now if you can. Go, sin no more."

Some people make the foolish boast, "I always speak my mind." To which we might often say, "It is the very last thing you ought to speak. Consider how changeable is the mind. What you imagine to be right in a moment of passion or of thoughtless talkativeness, within half an hour you may see to have been thoroughly wrong."

A youthful compositor, in setting some "copy," came to the sentence : " — didn't say a word for an hour," the first word having been cut off in clipping from the paper where it first appeared. He took it to the foreman to supply the word. "What shall I put in there?" he asked, when the foreman read it. "Put in 'he,' of course ; you don't suppose 'she' would fit in such a sentence as that, do you?" was the answer. In all ages women's conversation has been a subject for ridicule. They are said to talk too much, to have venomous spiteful tongues, to be addicted to nagging, to disdain argumentation, and even sense, in their talk. For ourselves we believe that the sins of the tongue are committed about equally by both sexes. Of course women have more talking to do than men have, for social intercourse is mainly indebted to them for its existence, and their desire to please in society may sometimes tempt them to talk too much. It is to be feared that few women or even men are like Count Moltke, who, though he can speak seven languages, can hold his tongue in them all.

"Why, Doctor," exclaimed a shallow talkative lady who was

in the room with Dr. Johnson, but of whom he took little notice, "I believe you prefer the company of men to that of the ladies." "Madam," he replied, "I am very fond of the company of ladies; I like their beauty, I like their delicacy, and I like their *silence*."

Certainly silence may be as great a fault as talkativeness, and, as Franklin said, we shall be judged for every idle silence as well as for every idle word. If "a wise man by his words maketh himself beloved," a fool may on certain occasions, by obstinate, sulky silence, make himself hated. There is selfish ill-tempered silence as well as thoughtless ill-natured talk. Whilst we remember the words of Solomon, "In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin; but he that refraineth his lips is wise," let us not forget the words that follow: "The tongue of the just is as choice silver. . . . The lips of the righteous feed many."

We ought to contribute a share to the instruction and amusement of society; but we ought to learn to be silent wisely when we cannot speak fitly. If we can say something better than silence, by all means let us say it; if not, we should be silent. We ought to cultivate the art of saying much *in* a little, and abstain, as from a social vice, from the tedious loquacity which says much *on* a little. "We are more gratified," says Lord Beaconsfield, "by the slight conversation of one who is often silent, than by the ceaseless stream of an uninterrupted talker." The first talks less, but he says more.

When St. Francis de Sales visited Paris, many ladies came to him for advice. On one occasion he was surrounded by a crowd of them all talking at once; so he said, "Mesdames, I

will gladly answer all your questions if you will answer on mine. What is to happen in an assembly where every talks and no one listens?" A hostess may be pleased w at her entertainments every one talks and no one listens then she thinks the guests are enjoying themselves, but t are persons who love fewer words, an inoffensive sort of pe and who deserve some regard.

A few seasons ago, at a drawing-room concert in Lon those who should have been listeners very rudely bec talkers. The leader of the musicians had suffered an ance from the same cause on former occasions, so he arrar beforehand that on this occasion, in the loudest part of movement, at an understood signal, piano, violin, and vio cello should suddenly cease. They did so, to the t sternation of the assembly, many of whom were engaged animated conversation. Clear and loud was heard the sil voice of a lady saying to her companion, "We always fry c in lard!" No doubt this was valuable information, and i well that anything so innocent should have been heard, the speaker might have remembered that there is a time keep silence.

A rather celebrated old French marquis held strong opinio on this subject. His earnest and reiterated advice on t topic of matrimony was concentrated chiefly on this one poi "Marry a handsome woman if you will, a rich one if you ca he used to say; "but in any case marry a woman who listen Is there any picture more lovely, in the whole gallery Shakespeare's women, than the portrait of the beautiful Venetian winning Othello's heart by the perfection of her listeni

Some of the most popular women have neither beauty, rank, nor wealth to recommend them ; we have known such owe their position in the hearts of their friends chiefly to the fact that they were the most charming of listeners.

From the very nature of their admirable qualities many wives and mothers fall into the habit of nagging. It is not the slipshod, happy-go-lucky people that are annoyed by the faults of other—the shirking, the want of considerateness, the total disregard of every plain duty. A careful housewife, fully alive to the importance of thoroughness in the little things of the household, as well as in larger things in the conduct of life, sees constantly much undone on the part of husband, children, and servants, that in the constant endeavour to set them all right, to restrain this one, or bring that one up to the requisite point, or to ward off the consequences of the thoughtlessness of this one, the habit of nagging grows stronger and stronger upon her from day to day. But let her possess her soul in patience.

Better that the peccadilloes in the kitchen should be observed at times by the mistress than that the house should be shunned by all the servants in the neighbourhood ; better that the faults of the children should be lightly reproofed than that they should learn to do without their mother's sympathy and love, which will most likely be the case if she pursue towards them a course of perpetual and persistent fault-finding ; better that the husband's petty failings be passed over in silence than that he should learn to find his happiness away from home, perhaps in some other woman's home.

It is not meant that all reproof or fault-finding is reprehensible.

sible ; children and servants must be shown how to do better, but with judicious words of commendation thrown in to temper the blame. In this, as in other things, let a golden mean be observed.





CHAPTER XXIV

WOMAN'S LETTERS.

"Nowadays it is no exaggeration to say that a good deal of our comfort depends upon the action of our neighbour's pen."—*Simeon Sobersides*.



OME one has said that if you want to see the easiest, most nervous, and most graphic style of writing, you should waylay the postman and search in his bag for every letter in a lady's handwriting. We fear, however, that in these rapid days the art of letter-writing, like the art of conversation, is becoming a lost one even with ladies. More letters no doubt are written than ever before, but they are "dashed off," and their writers do not take the trouble of putting anything into them worth reading. When families are, in the course of events, separated, their scattered members cannot be united by an occasional post-card or telegram, but only by a frequent interchange of careful correspondence.

“ When first engaged
She used to write
On monogram paper
Of creamy white.

But since we’re married—
It’s rather hard—
She says all she wants
On a thin post-card.”

There is, therefore, great need for a revival of the old fashion of graceful, careful, and elegant correspondence between friends ; for letters which shall convey something of the writer’s self, and which shall be worth keeping and reading when the writer’s hand is dust.

Many women write letters first and think afterwards, and the half of the letters which they write would never be written at all or would be written much better if they reversed the process. Some write only to work off superfluous energy or to relieve their emotional feelings : as a French lady wrote to her husband—

“ ‘ Je vous écris parceque je n’ai rien à faire ;
Je finis parceque je n’ai rien à dire.’ ”

“ ‘ I write to you because I have nothing to do ; I leave off because I have nothing to say.’ ”

A letter written from pure idleness is not likely to be very interesting. Nor shall we have much to say unless we think of the sort of things he to whom we are writing would like to hear if we were talking to him.

Most people desire to get news and information in their letters, and not merely the recapitulation of what they them-

selves have stated in a previous one. Can anything be more aggravating than the following style of feminine letter? "It must be very pleasant to have your sister with you, and what a surprise such-and-such an event must have been! No doubt you feel glad that So-and-so, &c., and your plan of doing so-and-so will be sure to prove a good one." Some notice of news received and sympathy expressed, as the case may be, is a very good thing, but not to the exclusion of news.

We have all groaned with mild exasperation over a letter supposed to be a reply to one of our own, but which took not the smallest notice of our modest communication, even in a cursory mention of its arrival, left all our questions unanswered, and, with curious ingenuity, omitted every scrap of information on the subject that most interested us. It would be a relief to their friends if some ladies could give in matters unconnected with marriage short and direct answers like the written reply made by a young lady of the last century to a clergyman who had asked her to marry him: "Rev. Stephen Mix.—Yes.—Mary Stoddart."

The ability to write a short letter, saying neatly what we wish to say, is most valuable. An ill-composed, ill-arranged epistle, beginning with a blot and ending with a scribble, will never do for business. It must be clear and to the point, carefully written and neatly folded.

When the postage of letters was expensive, in order to get value for their money people took pains to make them worth the carriage. Macaulay, in his brilliant Parliamentary career, when engagements were crowding upon him, and he had enough responsibility to fill the hands of two or three men, never failed

to write delightful letters to his sister. Letters like those of Miss Sedgwick, of Eugénie de Guénin, of Madame de Sévigné, were not written hurriedly, nor regarded by their authors as of secondary importance, but they paid those to whom they wrote the compliment of taking pains.

The best letters are innocently gossipy, relating the homeliest everyday life of yourself and of your friends. Like most of us, Burns wished his friends to write whatever came first. "What you see, what you read, what you hear, what you admire, what you dislike; trifles, bagatelles, nonsense, or, to fill up a corner, e'en put down a laugh at full length." The charm of most celebrated writers of letters consists very much in their power of imparting themselves to others. Unless there is in our letters something which, without the aid of our signature, reveals ourselves, our own individuality, correspondence, from an artistic point of view, is valueless.

We ought not of course to talk too much about ourselves in a letter, although that young lady need not have been so very reticent about herself, who, having gone out to India, and writing home to her friends, concluded with the following words: "P.S.—You will see by my signature that I am married." This, by-the-bye, is a good illustration of the saying that the pith of a woman's letter is in the postscript. A lady laid a wager with her husband, on his leaving home, that her first letter would be without a postscript. Nothing seemed more certain than that she would win. The letter was written and signed, and about to be despatched, when she was tempted to add one line, forming the first postscript, "You see, I have written a letter without a postscript." This was not sufficient,

for there followed as a P.P.S. immediately afterwards, "Who has won the wager—you or I?"

Got-up, forced mirth is anything but pleasing, and so if a letter is to reflect the mood of the hour and to express the mind of the writer it cannot always be hilarious. Nevertheless, it is anything but kind to darken friendly hearts with a shadow which may have passed away from the writer before her letter has been received. Let your letters be uncomplaining, cheerful, and tranquil, and do not write them when you are in forlorn, morbid, and sorrowful moods.

Delaying to answer a letter is like forgetting to return a book or an umbrella. The longer one neglects it the longer one will do so. A great many friendships are dissolved, home ties are weakened on the part of the absent, and those who love each other drift apart, through the indolence which looks on letter-writing as burdensome, and the discourtesy which does not attend to it promptly. It is easier to answer a letter when the excitement of receiving it is fresh. This of course only applies to ordinary letters. There are difficult ones, when it is well to sleep a night or several nights over them before we consign them to the Post Office. A letter, like a word, can never be recalled again, as that gentleman whose case I mention in my book, "How to be Happy Though Married," discovered. The individual, who was well known to me, after dropping into a letter-pillar a proposal to a young lady, was seen a few moments afterwards endeavouring to extract with a stick the precious document. Failing in his attempt, the wretched mortal walked round and round the pillar, tortured with the recurrence of reasons against matrimony which he had lately argued away.


Fortunately for both parties the lady refused the tempting offer. Ladies ! beware of writing a letter either accepting or refusing a proposal of marriage too quickly. And as when you are angry you should let the sun go down before speaking or acting, so especially ought you to do so before writing a letter.

To comfort the bereaved, to arrest the steps of wanderers from the right path, to crown the joy of the happy, and to entertain some dear invalid shut in from active duty, what so potential as a letter ? If women could realize the power and influence their letters might have they would take more trouble in writing them.

“ Heaven first taught letters for some wretch’s aid,
Some banished lover, or some captive maid.
They live, they speak, they breathe what love inspires,
Warm from the soul, and faithful to its fires ;
Speed the soft intercourse from soul to soul,
And waft a sigh from Indus to the Pole.”

How much is a mother’s letter to a home-sick little schoolboy or that of a wife or daughter to the husband and father whose business compels him to be far away from home ! Some of us remember the days that are now, alas ! no more when a “ soft intercourse from soul to soul ” was conveyed by love-letters. We shall not dogmatically determine whether or not a girl should ever write what might be called a love-letter to a man until she is engaged to be married to him ; but we must caution her against the indiscretion of hastily-begun clandestine correspondence or of writing to one whom her parents and true friends regard with a not unjust suspicion.

The origin of Miss Weston’s work amongst bluejackets is



well known. She had written a friendly letter to a soldier on board one of Her Majesty's troopships. The soldier showed it to a sailor, who said that he would give anything to have such a letter written to him. The soldier wrote and asked Miss Weston to write to his sailor friend, and this is what first suggested to her that she could do good by writing letters to friendless sailors far away from home. Now her monthly "blue backs" are gratefully received by almost every sailor in the Royal and by a large proportion of those in the Merchant Navy.

Under the title "These Seven Years," Miss Skinner has published an interesting account of her Friendly Letter Mission. She seems in her messages of love to have thought of all classes of people, including herdsmen, gamekeepers, and donkey-boys. Organists, painters, laundresses, and many others have had special letters addressed to them. Thousands of men and boys are employed in Welsh collieries and quarries, and to such whose lives are often hard and lonely and exposed to peril, these cheerful, loving letters must be welcome indeed. Miss Skinner has sent her friendly letters out into France, Germany, Italy, Denmark, and even into the Far East.

"'I am working among ignorant women,' writes a correspondent from Mount Lebanon; 'they would be thankful for a Friendly Letter they could understand;' and Miss Skinner exclaims, 'Nothing gave me more pleasure than to see my letters in Arabic, and feel that by their means I might do some good in the land where Jesus lived and died.' It is believed that about 364,700 Letters have been distributed in various countries during 'these seven years,' and all were specially

written to draw the human heart nearer to the Lord of all. 'I hate letter-writing—I never know what to say,' is a familiar cry of the present generation. What a difference it would make even to our own feelings if, in this weary letter-writing, our hearts could say, like a young scholar who explained to us his feelings, 'I do the best I can, because my Father stands by and watches me while I write 'I''

Nothing shows the true lady more than the mechanism of her letters. As regards the writing itself, it should be as artistic as possible. To write badly is discourteous, because it looks as if you thought that any scrawl were good enough for your friend, no matter what trouble may be required to read it. If a woman has no other postscript she sometimes puts, "Excuse haste and a bad pen," but no one should write to a friend in indecent haste, and pens are cheap to buy. Who has not seen the heads of a whole family bent together in true sympathy over a small scrap of paper on which the ingenious writer had comp'etely concealed his intended communication? Then his signature: why should he have thought it necessary to make of it a flourishing hieroglyphic the clue to which can be furnished only by himself, or by a few friends initiated in the mystery? Characteristic, perhaps—but of what? Certainly not of order or thought for others. Worse and worse; where does he live? Shall the privileged person who received his letter direct his answer, as was once done, to

A—— B—— Esq.

Illegible Scrawl,

Shiretown?

(Strange to say, the writer duly received both the rebuke

and the letter.) More to be followed is the example of that considerate Irish girl, who, being observed writing a letter in a very large hand, and being questioned as to why she employed such large characters, replied: "Arrah, dear, an' isn't it to my poor mother I'm writing? An' she is so very deaf that I'm writing her a loud letter."

Writing should be round and clear, though it is by no means necessary to write so large that the whole length of a line is covered with two words. It is disappointing to those who care for the news you could send to see what the newspaper call "valuable space" wasted in this way.

If you cannot spell, use a dictionary, and avoid, except in business letters, abbreviations such as "I'm," "yr," "wd," "c/o" (for "care of"). Do not make your letter like the bill of a washerwoman or grocer by writing the year with a long stroke and the last two figures only, nor substitute a numerical for the name of the month. Avoid slang in writing as much as in speaking. Use strong grammatical English, and make your meaning as clear as daylight. Many people do not take time to punctuate; but the meaning of a sentence is quite obscured or perverted when no stops are used, or when they are put in wrong places. These considerations may appear to be "mere trifles"; but

"Grains of sand the mountains make,
And atomies infinity."



CHAPTER XXV.

WOMAN'S STUDIES.

"She with all the charm of woman,
She with all the breadth of man."—*Tennyson.*

"Women govern us. Let us render them perfect: the more they are enlightened so much the more shall we be. On the cultivation of the mind of woman depends the wisdom of man. It is by woman that nature writes on the hearts of men."—*Sheridan.*

"Literature gives woman a real and proper weight in society, but then they must use it with discretion; if the stocking is *blue*, the petticoat must be *long*."—*Sydney Smith.*



NE cannot help feeling sorry for young ladies who grow dull and bored as soon as they cease to be excited by some gay party, or occupied by some projected entertainment. Life is worth little if it must be continually fed with artificial stimulants. Ladies, resolve that you will have resources, and lay up stores for thought and memory, against the days which may come—days of pain, illness, or enforced seclusion because of weakness and advancing years (if a woman's years may be

said to advance). Determine that you will be bright and pleasant, even when the beauty of youth is gone. This is one of the many reasons for acquiring a taste for reading. Stella's verses to Swift may not be very poetical, but they convey a warning against the folly of trusting to a pretty face alone, without mental endowments for future happiness :—

“Such is the fate of female race,
With no endowments but a face—
Before the thirtieth year of life,
A maid forlorn, or hated wife.
Stella to you, her tutor, owes
That she has ne'er resembled those ;
Nor was a burden to mankind,
With half her course of years behind.
You taught how I might youth prolong,
By knowing what was right and wrong ;
How from my heart to bring supplies
Of lustre to my failing eyes ;
How soon a beauteous mind repairs
The loss of changed or falling hairs ;
How wit and virtue from within
Send out a smoothness o'er the skin :
Your lectures could my fancy fix,
And I can please at thirty-six.”

It is true that the worst kind of relaxation is reading, if it consist only of dreadful pennyworths of the “literature of the streets” ; but there are now, thanks to the enterprise of several publishers, who should be supported more than they are, “penny healthfuls,” which, to say the least, are harmless without being dull. It is not so much a question of what you women read, as of how you read it, for I am sure that those of you who respect yourselves take care that books are not heaped

up in your lap as they fall out of the package of the circulating library, "wet with the last and lightest spray of the fountain of folly." Speaking of a girl's reading, Mr. Ruskin says, "Let her loose in the library, as you do a fawn in the field. It knows the bad weeds twenty times better than you, and the good ones too, and will eat some bitter and prickly ones, good for it, which you had not the slightest thought would have been so." In the choice of books, as in the choice of friends, there is really only one rule—choose the best.

In one of Lord Macaulay's letters to a pet little niece, he tells her that she will find that "Books are better than all the tarts and cakes and toys and plays and sights in the world. If anybody would make me the greatest king that ever lived, with palaces and gardens and fine dinners, and wine and coaches and beautiful clothes and hundreds of servants, on condition that I would not read books, I would not be a king. I would rather be a poor man in a garret with plenty of books than a king who did not love reading."

We are afraid that the majority of little girls like "tarts and cakes and toys" better than books, and that not a few big girls and women would rather have "beautiful clothes"; nevertheless a taste for reading may be acquired with a little diligence by almost every one, certainly by young persons. Even "solid" reading does not prove on acquaintance as "dry" as to some it may at first appear. If a girl force herself to read good books she will get to like good books. A writer in one of the magazines tells us that a young lady, fresh from school, once asked him to lend her a book.

"I placed in her hands Carlyle's 'Sartor Resartus, and I

was not a little curious as to what the result would be. When she returned the book the young lady said that the first time she read it she could make nothing of it. She read the volume a second time, and thought she began to understand it. She read it a third time, and was enraptured with its contents. Such a threefold reading of such a book was nothing less than an education in itself."

Every girl and woman should determine to know something thoroughly, however little, of the *best*. Ten minutes each day, five or six solid books a year—will enable you to do this. There is no excuse for reading trash, when the standard works on good subjects are as easily obtainable. Gather a little standard library of your own; you will respect yourself, and others will respect you for it. Keep a note-book, fill it with the best things. Read and think; read a little and think much; read when at leisure, think when at work.

If a girl wishes to be educated, neither poverty nor a busy life need prevent her from attaining the object of her desire. At the American Girls' University at Vassar, a practical proof has been given by a poor but determined girl of the possibility of obtaining a college education by the most indigent. Soon after her arrival at the University, she placed the following bill in the window of her room and bravely set to work:—"Gloves and shoes neatly mended for 10 cents each. Breakfast brought up for 10 cents. Hair brushed each night for 25 cents a week. Beds made up at 10 cents a week." The *New York Morning Journal* states that during the twelve months she has been at Vassar she has earned in this way enough to keep herself respectably and to pay her tuition fees.

Much may be learned from a good novel, and it is refreshing to get away from self while reading of even imaginary characters, but there can be no doubt that excessive novel reading is one of the enfeebling dissipations of our day, especially when the debased appetite for strong effects is indulged to the neglect of character studies.

It is said that this is a reading age, but it is far more an age of gossip, and we bring our love of gossip into our reading. Hence the popularity of "Society" papers and the like. Truly half the gossip of Society would perish if the books that are really worth reading were read. In his "Advancement of Learning" Lord Bacon advises the use of mathematics for "bird-witted" boys, *i.e.*, for boys whose minds, like the birds, never stay long at one place, but are always flying from one point to another. If boys require reading that cultivates the power of fixing attention, girls do even more. Indeed we are all in danger of becoming "bird-witted" now that the newspaper and the magazine have driven the book into a corner. Some consider even a newspaper article too long, and prefer to feed like sparrows on scraps and tit-bits. When people in this way "turn from the good wheaten bread of true literature to the bran, and chaff, and sawdust of smart ephemeral trivialities and personal Society scandalmongery," the result is a dissipation of energy and a loss of power for sustained interest and concentrated attention.

Life is short, and the number of papers, magazines, and books that are published are very great, therefore it behoves us to choose the best, and resolutely pass by those that are inferior. Addressing girls on the subject of reading, Mr.

Ruskin asks them : " Do you know if you read this, that you cannot read that—that what you lose to-day you cannot gain to-morrow ? Will you go and gossip with your housemaid, or your stable-boy, when you may talk with kings and queens ? " Of course the most unselfish kinds of amusement are those which can be shared by the largest number of people. For this reason reading aloud is a higher and better recreation than reading to oneself, and it is a great pity that it should have become the lost art it is. Girls miss much of the pleasure that comes from pleasing others, if, because they are too lazy, or because they have never cultivated clear and distinct articulation, they do not attempt in this way to entertain the family circle.

" We once knew," says Mrs. Warren, " a case where the husband was ill for two years, unable to move without assistance. His temper was irritable beyond expression. The wife had no knowledge of music or singing, but she was a charming reader—reading exactly as if talking, and many an agony of pain in the husband was soothed by her voice and tone."

Reading and reciting poetry is an accomplishment which should be daily practised while yet in girlhood ; it ranks among the highest attractions in wifehood and motherhood. Unfortunately there are some wives and daughters who shine everywhere except that place where they ought to be most entertaining.

" Ah, old fellow," said a gentleman, meeting another, " so you are married at last. Allow me to congratulate you, for I hear you have an excellent and accomplished wife."

" I have indeed," was the reply ; " she is accomplished.

Why, sir, she is perfectly at home in literature ; at home in music ; at home in art ; at home in science—in short at home everywhere, except——”

“ Except what ? ”

“ Except at home.”

As regards the serious studies which a girl or woman should undertake, I believe with Mr. Ruskin, that they should be nearly the same in kind, though not in degree, as those of a boy or man. “ A woman, in any rank of life, ought to know whatever her husband is likely to know, but to know it in a different way.” What she does learn she should learn very accurately ; but she need not learn as much as a man. Her knowledge of a language or science, however elementary (not superficial), will suffice if it enable her to sympathize in her husband’s pleasures, and in those of his best friends.

It may be said that a girl should study for her own sake, and not merely in order to qualify herself to be the companion of some man whom she may never marry. This is true, but we were thinking, as no doubt Mr. Ruskin was too, when he said that “ a woman ought to know whatever her husband is likely to know ”—we were thinking of the wrong that is done to a girl when she is badly educated, and so little encouraged to educate herself, that if she do marry she is in danger of being despised by her husband and sons. If girls are brought up as if they were meant for sideboard ornaments, they will not have much influence for good over the men who become their husbands. In a useful book called “What Girls Can Do,” we read lately an illustration of what we mean ; the writer says :

“ A family of my acquaintance consists of three sons and

two daughters. The sons are unusually talented, intelligent, and capable. The daughters have, I should imagine, as good abilities as they: they are tasteful, kind, and amiable, but their minds are exclusively given to detail. They rarely read, and when they do so they choose the most milk-and-watery novels, are not able to appreciate intellectual conversation, and take no interest whatever in the various great questions of the day.

"I felt quite at a loss to understand how it was that the girls were so different to the boys of the family, until the mother, a very clever managing woman, explained the mystery. 'I have no opinion whatever,' she said one day, 'of the girls of the present time. What sort of wives and mothers will they make, I wonder? They spend the time in reading that they ought to give to domestic affairs, and learn French, German, and I know not what else, instead of making bread at home, and getting up shirts and collars for their fathers and brothers. I am thankful to say I never let my daughters act so. If ever I saw them with a book in their hands I sent them instantly to needlework. I would not allow them to waste their time in reading.' 'And a very great wrong you have done your girls, my friend,' thought I. 'You might have trained them to be domesticated, but you had no business to forbid them to read. It is your fault that your daughter, though married to an intelligent, thoughtful young fellow, is gradually losing all influence over her husband, and is nothing of a companion for him. She will have to thank you if her children as they grow up learn to look down upon their mother. For the sake of your own peace of mind, I hope you will never realize what you have done.'"

Happily the old notion that it makes a woman somewhat

unwomanly to be well educated is almost entirely exploded. We have come to see that of the distinctive feminine qualities of mind which are admired as such by all, ignorance is not one, and that therefore learning as learning can never deteriorate these. It can only tend the better to equip a wife as helpmeet by furthering community of tastes with her husband. It can only prepare a mother for forming the tastes and minds of her children, thus improving the stock of national talents. And to her who passes her youth without being either wife or mother learning becomes a shield against neglect and scorn.

But though we believe that in the main the pleasures of society are increased and the progress of humanity is furthered by the education of women, we cannot help seeing that education does not necessarily create companionable nor even sensible women. Lady Fanshaw, Lady Rachel Russell, Elizabeth Fry, Hannah More, Mary Carpenter, Florence Nightingale, and many others that might be mentioned, were not noted for their learning, but they were none the less women whose mark in history is indelible, and the good they did lives after them and will never die. And taking one of the at least partially learned ladies of the past—is it her Latinity and her bookishness that we admire so much in Lady Jane Grey, or is it her modesty, her gentleness, her saintly patience, her devotion—in a word, is it her education or her character—the intellectual philosopher or the sweet and lovely and noble woman?

Probably the best and most thoughtful men will be found to agree in one respect at least with the great German philosopher, Immanuel Kant. He was fond of society, and it was curious

to notice the sort of woman he would single out for special attention. He took no notice whatever of the merely accomplished, and was most attentive to those of good common sense, of unaffected manner, of cheerful habit, or of cleverness in household matters. He seems to have been of the same opinion as a recent writer who says that no woman is educated "who is not equal to the successful management of a family. When you see a man leave his club at 9 p.m. and run all the way home, you can make up your mind that his wife is highly educated."

A thoughtless, selfish, snappish, fretful, overbearing, and dictatorial young woman may take prizes at school, may excel at music, and travel round the world, but the more she knows, the less culture she has. The commonest country girl, with good health, an open brain, and a warm, unselfish, patient, self-controlled disposition, is a hundredfold more cultured than the boarding-school graduate, who is fractious with her mother, cross with her sisters, or knows too much to associate with other girls. Disposition is culture. Health is the soil, intelligence the branches, and disposition the leaves, buds, and blossoms—the robe of living beauty, fragrance, and sweetness with which a young woman is to clothe her life. Without heart-culture the finest mental culture is like a tree with nothing but cold, leafless limbs.



CHAPTER XXVI.

OUGHT WOMEN TO BE BRAVE?

"In the presence of sudden danger to herself or those dear to her, or even to utter strangers, a woman sometimes feels herself seized with super-human courage, and, like Grace Darling, she will undertake deeds from which brave men might shrink."—*The Family Circle*.



PARTICULARLY vigorous speaker at a woman's rights meeting waving her long arms like the sails of a windmill, asked, "If the women of this country were to rise up in their thousands and march to the polls, I should like to know what there is on this earth that could stop them!" And in the momentary silence which followed this peroration a still small voice remarked: "A mouse!" Satire like this is rather out of date now, but there was a time when it had a meaning.

In ancient and mediæval times we read of women being brave, but about a hundred years ago it became the fashion

for them to be fragile and timid. They fancied that an affectation of terror made them interesting and attractive, so they used to faint when they saw a mouse or spider, and shrieked when they met a peaceful cow. Now, however, we have come to see that courage, not only moral, but physical, is required by women almost as much as by men. We are far from admiring the girl who cannot control herself in the presence of sudden fright and calamity. The ideal girl is self-reliant: by no means pushing, forward, or aggressive; but able to take care of herself, and armoured in modest courage. "Not long ago," writes an American lady, "a young friend of mine was sent with a party of people to England to study a difficult branch of art. 'Were you not afraid to let Alice go so far away, when she must depend so much on herself for guidance?' was asked of one of her relatives. 'Not at all,' was the reply. 'Alice is a responsible person. I would trust her anywhere.'"

Such self-reliance may, but there is no reason why it should, degenerate into arrogance and impertinent self-assertion, but where real courage exists, that bravado, which is so disagreeable, is seldom found.

Mark Twain speaks of young ladies who leap over stones and steps so as to escape the bark of a dog. If one of them is walking with a friend of the male kind she will cling to the masculine arm, and beseech him to walk so that she might lose sight of that horrible creature known as a dog. We think that such timidity does not add to a girl's charms, not even in the opinion of a friend of the male kind clung to.

Women are called the "weaker sex," but there never was a greater misnomer. There certainly was little weakness in the

composition of that heroic nun about whom the newspapers lately published the following account :—

“ In presence of all the French troops guarding the capital of Tonquin the Governor-General recently bestowed the Cross of the Legion of Honour on a nun, Mother Mary Teresa, Superioress of the Sisters of Charity in that empire. The troops were drawn up in the principal plaza of the city, in a square surrounding a platform on which were the Governor-General and his staff. When an aide-de-camp was sent to bring the nun he found her in the hospital consoling a soldier who was having his leg amputated. She refused to leave the bedside until the operation was completed, and then followed the officer to the square, where she was received by the General in person, and led up to the platform amid the joyful exclamations of the soldiers. The General then, amid impressive silence, addressed her as follows :—

“ ‘ Mother Mary Teresa, when you were twenty years of age you received a wound from a cannon-ball while assisting one of the wounded on the field of Balaklava. In 1859 the shell from a mitrailleuse laid you prostrate in the front rank on the battlefield of Magenta. Since then you have been in Syria, in China, and in Mexico ; and if you were not wounded it was not because you have not exposed yourself to the shot of gun and cannon, and the sabres and lances of the enemy. In 1870 you were taken up in Reischoffen covered with many sabre wounds among a heap of dead cuirassiers. Such deeds of heroism you have crowned a few weeks ago with one of the most heroic actions which history records. A grenade fell upon the ambulance which was under your charge. It did not

burst, but it might have done so at any moment and caused new wounds in the bodies of those who were already wounded ; but there you were—you took up the grenade in your arms, you smiled upon the wounded, who looked at you with feelings of dismay, not for themselves, but for you, and you carried it away to a distance of eighty metres. On laying it down you noticed that it was going to burst ; you threw yourself on the ground ; it burst ; you were seen covered with blood, but when persons came to your assistance you rose up smiling, as is your wont, and said, “That is nothing !” You are scarcely recovered from your wound, and you return to the hospital whence I have just now summoned you.’”

During these words of praise the good nun held her head modestly cast down, with her eyes fixed on the crucifix that hung by her side. Then the General made her kneel down, and, drawing his sword, touched her lightly with it three times on the shoulder, and pinned the Cross of the Legion of Honour on her habit, saying, with a quivering voice : “I put upon you the Cross of the brave, in the name of the French people and army ; no one has gained it by more deeds of heroism, nor by a life so completely spent in self-abnegation for the benefit of your brothers and the service of your country. Soldiers, present arms !”

The troops saluted, the drums beat, and bugles rang out, the air was filled with loud acclamations, and all was jubilation and excitement, as Mother Mary Teresa rose up, her face suffused with blushes, and asked : “General, have you finished with me ?” “Yes,” said he. “Well, then, I am going back to my wounded soldier in the hospital !”

There are heroic deeds being done every day by women that do not find their way into the newspapers, but without searching for them I have come across a good many recorded accounts. I give one more specimen:—"Hi! hi!" shouted again and again a group of excited people who had a few minutes before been quietly sauntering along the streets of San Diego in California. The cause of the violent uproar soon became painfully clear. A herd of wild cattle was being driven through the town. As is well known, the temper of these animals is uncertain. A little child was playing in the street not far from the spot where the cattle were passing, when one of the bulls—a huge creature, with large horns—made a sudden rush at the poor bairn. To add to the terror of the scene, the drover was tipsy, and in trying to turn the furious animal he fell off his horse. Then arose those warning yells from the spectators, as they beheld the terrible fate from which, as it seemed, nothing could save the child. At this very moment a lady happened to come into the street, and the noise of the tumult at once attracted her attention. She saw the child's appalling danger at a glance, and immediately sprang into the empty saddle. She succeeded in catching up the wild bull, and threw her shawl over its head just as it was about to charge the child. She then, without leaving the saddle, lifted the child to her lap, and took it away to a place of safety. This brilliant act of bravery awoke round after round of hearty applause from every one who witnessed it; and as one reads of the splendid act one can almost hear the cheering yet. As was said at the time, this gallant deed of Miss Lawrence's—for such was the lady's name—was not only

heroic, but a feat of horsemanship which few people could equal.

It does not appear as brave to face infection and other kinds of unseen danger as it does to face a storm of bullets, but that women every day go through danger greater than what is met on a battle-field will be seen at once if we consider the risks run, say, by hospital nurses. Dr. William Farr, of the Registrar-General's Office, states that "the mortality in the fifteen largest metropolitan hospitals, amongst the nurses, exceeds the ordinary mortality of the female population of London, in the ratio of 40 per cent.;" and, when quoting this statement, Professor Erichsen observed, in the course of a speech of his, "What does a mortality of 40 per cent. represent? It means that, out of every hundred hospital nurses who die, forty would still be living, at any given time, if they followed a less hazardous walk in life. A mortality of 40 per cent. is tenfold greater than that which is inflicted by the bullet upon any field of battle. This mortality is the result of the conditions to which these women voluntarily expose themselves; and that is proved by this additional fact, that 50 per cent. (exactly one-half) of all the nurses who die, die of infectious diseases, of fevers, &c., caught in the discharge of their duties. Add to this item of deaths from infectious fevers, small-pox, &c., the destruction of limb, if not of life, or of health and bodily power, from blood-poisoning, insufficient sleep, over-taxing of the nerves or muscles, depressing influences, lack of fresh air and change of scene, and casualties of all kinds."

There may have been a little humorous exaggeration in his words, but General Gordon certainly did say that all the anxiety

and danger he had undergone was not a tithe of what any nurse has to undergo who is attached to a querulous invalid. According to Rochefoucauld, true bravery is shown by performing without witness what one might be capable of doing before all the world. If this be the case, the bravery of many women is of the highest kind, for it is called forth not in a public capacity, but in the privacy of home.

Then, if "the courage that dares and the courage that bears are really one and the same," women must be considered very daring indeed. We are apt to forget that it requires often more courage to suffer well than to do well, and to disparage the first virtue because it especially belongs to the so-called "weaker sex."

It is generally supposed that in a panic—as, for instance, when a theatre is on fire, or a vessel is sinking—women are the most terrified, and lose their heads soonest. We very much doubt whether this is the case. An American gentleman, who has been present during several panics on board vessels, declares that it is often the cowardice of men which communicates terror to women and sets them shrieking, thus increasing the horror of the situation. A few cool-headed men, by calmly talking to the women, will always succeed in quieting them. If, in such critical emergencies, people would only retain their self-control, the chances of their lives being preserved would be increased tenfold. As it is, by selfish, rash, and desperate attempts to escape from the danger, hundreds often, from this very cause, succumb to it.

In the "Narrative of the Loss of the *Kent*," in 1825, we read of the dignified, courageous behaviour of two ladies on

that awful occasion. When the women, who had crowded all together from all parts of the ship, were informed that there was no hope, and that death was rapidly and inevitably approaching, one of the ladies referred to, calmly sinking down on her knees, and clasping her hands together, said, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus!" and immediately proposed to read out of the Bible to those around her. Her sister, with nearly equal composure and collectedness of mind, selected the forty-sixth, and other appropriate Psalms, which were accordingly read, with intervals of prayer, by the two ladies.

How many girls and women have been burned to death because they "lost their heads" through fear when they got on fire! If one of you fair readers found yourself in flames what would you do? "Ring the bell violently, is what I should do," answers one who is accustomed to ring for her maid on all occasions. "Run for some water," we hear another reply; and another, "Roll myself in a rug or blanket." What you ought to do is this. Have the courage, without stopping to ring for help, to at once lie down and roll over and over. In this way you can put the fire out better than any one else can possibly do for you so long as you remain standing. Light one end of a paper spill and hold it perpendicularly, and it will burn much faster than it would lying inside the fender. So will you burn faster standing up than lying down.

The following true story is an instance of courage and presence of mind displayed by a young girl. Dressed in a muslin evening dress, she wished to reach a book from the top shelf of a high bookcase that stood upon a chest of drawers in her bedroom. Putting her candle at the further end of the

chest of drawers, by the help of a chair she stood on the drawers to reach the book. She had not allowed sufficiently for the width to which her skirts would extend, and her dress caught fire. Suddenly the room was brilliantly illuminated; imagine her horror on finding that it was by herself. Most girls of her age would have rushed screaming out of the room and downstairs in search of some one to help them. Had she done so, she would in all probability have been burned to death, and very likely have been the means of setting others on fire. But, with brave self-helpfulness, she pursued a far wiser course. She instantly jumped down from her elevated position and threw herself on the floor. She felt relief from the scorching of the flames, which an instant before had begun to blaze up to her neck and face. She told her friends afterwards she had intended to get up the hearthrug and wrap herself in it; but she had no time for this, for the flames were blazing around her even as she lay. Even then she did not for one instant lose her presence of mind, and jump up to ring or call for help, but she bravely rolled over and over—wherever she saw the flames she rolled over on to them and thus put them out. So quickly was all this done, that though the whole of the skirt of her muslin dress was burnt, yet the white petticoat she wore under it was untouched by the fire. This story illustrates the fact that there is safety in courage, and that the next best thing to absence of body in time of danger is presence of mind.

Our grandmothers were wont to extol the charms of a fireside existence for girls and women, but now out-door amusements and open-air life are enjoyed by women almost as much as by men. There are, of course, still "delicate" English ladies

who dread a long walk and a possible shower as much as an average Frenchwoman, but they are out of the fashion and exceptional. Nowadays girls can ride over a fence in good style, play tennis and cricket, fish, and, if they do not shoot themselves, tramp over moors and turnips with their sporting male friends. This is a move in the right direction. Kingsley says it is the hard east wind that makes hard Englishmen, and we, in our turn, may add it is the love of out-door life and sports, spiced with danger, that help to make so many Englishwomen fearless and resolute and with "a heart for any fate." It is said that "men must work and women must weep," but working as much as weeping falls to the lot of women in these busy, hard times. Anything, therefore, that braces them up for the hard struggle and battle of life is advantageous to them.

I suppose no one will deny that women have as much need of moral courage as men. Indeed, without this kind of courage a worthy, reliable character is impossible. It requires courage to tell truth and to act truth. The woman who has not the courage to say she cannot afford new dresses, and cannot live as richer people live, will be tempted to make use of all kinds of make-believes—that is to say, acted if not spoken falsehoods. To have the courage of her opinions, to dare to be her real self, to say "No" to temptation—this is the sort of courage which is never easy, but which is quite as essential to true girlhood and womanhood as to true manhood. Believe me, girls, if you gain the power of saying "No" on certain occasions you will really have more courage than was required to ride in the charge of the Light Brigade. You may not be rewarded with Victoria Crosses in this world, but in that

which is to come you will receive crowns of righteousness. In the battle of life "that noble type of good, heroic womanhood" is as much needed as heroic manhood. This is our answer to the question, Ought women to be brave?





CHAPTER XXVII.

A GIRL'S RELIGION.

"We are told in Eastern story that a single word, 'sesame,' opened the door of a cave which contained a vast amount of treasure in gold and jewels, so the single phrase *Talitha cumi* has power to unlock a rich storehouse of most instructive and comforting thought."—*Rev. Hugh Macmillan.*



HERE are many beautiful stories in the Bible, but none more so than that which records our Saviour's kindness to a little girl. There lived at Capernaum, or some other town on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee, a man called Jairus, one of the chief officers of the Synagogue. He had an only daughter of twelve years old—just at the age when a girl has had time to endear herself to her parents. She became very ill, and was thought to be dying. Her father hastens to One whom he had heard of as being able to effect great cures, falls at His feet, and prays Him to come and save his daughter. There is no delay on the part of the Gracious

Teacher. He goes with the father, followed by a great crowd. The life of that little Galilean maiden was as precious in His sight as the souls of those whom He was convincing by His Divine wisdom. Amidst the surging of the crowd, and above the hum of many voices, the Master's wakeful ear heard the whisper of a messenger, who had just come to say that it was too late—"Thy daughter is dead." He bade the father still keep up his heart—"Fear not, only believe." They arrive at the house. The hired mourners of Eastern countries are already there, wailing, and playing mournful tunes. Jesus touched the hand of the child, and addressed her in words that have been handed down without a change—"Talitha cumi;" "Damsel, arise." Our English translation of the Aramaic phrase conveys but little of the depth of tenderness of the original. If it were rendered "My little pet lamb, awake," it would come much nearer the meaning of the original. And its beauty is greatly enhanced when we know that it was the common term of endearment with which loving Syrian mothers awoke their children from an unusually prolonged sleep. It was therefore a household word—a term belonging to the nursery—to the innermost circle of home. By this endearing appellation the Good Shepherd roused the sleeping soul.

Nineteen centuries have passed since the Saviour spoke these words, but they are as full of meaning now as they were then to every girl who has ears to hear. "Talitha cumi"—My child, arise, get up from any slothful habit, from any frivolous, idle, selfish habit you have formed. My little lamb, mount up, be better this year than you were last year. Let

His voice reach your innermost heart and awake you from the sleep of indifference.

Not long ago an interesting memoir was written of one who heard words very similar to those which the Saviour spoke to the daughter of Jairus, and who acted upon them. An early friend of Catherine Spooner, who became Mrs. Tait, wife of the late Archbishop of Canterbury, remembers that in the flush of her bright girlhood, when every innocent delight was poured into her cup, she once told her how she had heard in her inmost heart, amidst all these joys and pleasures, a hidden voice saying, "Make for the higher." This aspiration and consecration of her life was never lowered. In the sphere of activity and social intercourse where the providence of God placed her, "Make for the higher" hallowed and sweetened all lower things for her.

What a contrast is such a girl to those dead souls of whom a physician lately remarked :—"There is no study in human nature so difficult to me as a certain class of young girls. I spent a part of this summer with two specimens of this class. They had the usual amount of capacity for observing, understanding, and feeling. They had been educated at much cost to their parents ; both were constant attendants at church. I saw nothing in their faces or bearing to argue that they were imbecile. Their mother was an invalid, nearing the grave. Nothing could be more touching than the patient, appealing gaze with which her eyes followed them, watching for some signal of affection, but they had eyes and thoughts for nothing but a gown they were making. They were used to her love, her illness—even to the thought of her death. I walked out

with them through a great forest under the solemn stars. They saw no beauty, no sublimity, in them ; they chatted incessantly of the new trimming on their bonnets. They were used to the meaning of the trees and stars. The only things, apparently, to which they were not used were the changes in ribbons, puffs, and flounces. I went to church with them and listened to the great *Te Deum*, which has come down to us through the ages, and lifted the hearts of countless worshippers to God. They nudged each other while they sang it, to look at a beaded cloak in the next pew. We physicians now test the temperature of a patient's body, and if we find it below a certain degree, know that death is already in the heart. When I find so low a degree in the words, thoughts, and actions of a human body, I begin to fear that the soul within is cold and dead beyond recall."

People are often puzzled about religion, and mystify themselves with problems which they fancy must be solved before they can become religious. There can, however, be little difficulty in understanding the only religion that a girl need much care to have. That is a very simple thing, for it begins and ends with a serious attempt to obey the Good Shepherd's word, "My little lamb, I say unto thee arise." If a girl loves and tries to follow the Lord Jesus Christ, let her do so in a girl's way, and in a girl's place, and her face, instead of becoming long and sad, will reflect the bright happiness of her heart. Girls will be, and ought to be; girls ; and a girl need not cease to be a girl because she is a Christian. She ought to play games and amuse herself like a real girl. But in all, she ought to show the spirit of Christ. She ought to be cheerful,

good-tempered, and industrious. She ought to be free from frivolity and selfishness. She ought to have a horror of everything spoken or written that is in the smallest degree impure. She ought to be gentle, kind, and generous. She ought not to be ashamed to say that she refuses to do something, because it is wicked and she fears God. She ought to take no part in the ridicule of sacred things, but meet the ridicule of others with a bold statement that for the things of God she feels the deepest reverence.

To be conscientious in duty, to go on errands of charity to the poor, to have the passions laid and the tempers sweetened by a habit of prayer, to draw from the fountain of truth that truthful habit which expels all affectation and makes her at once confiding and worthy of confidence. This is the soul of all that enters into a woman's accomplishments ; and without this her woman's accomplishments must want a soul, which is the most grievous of conceivable wants.

There are many of us who have just enough religion to take away the pleasures of sin, but not enough of it to make us happy, and our religion is too often rendered useless by being dissevered from our week-day business and recreations. And yet a woman who puts aside her religion because she is going into society, resembles a person taking off her shoes because she is about to walk upon thorns.

"I don't believe in that kind of religion." This is what I heard a sensible woman say the other day in speaking of a girl who was great at "parish work," but whose temper rendered her very far from being as agreeable as she should have been to the members of her own family. She professed

to have been "converted," but she did not show any evidence of the happy change to her friends at home.

We believe that many young people are prevented from trying or even wishing to be religious by the false notions about religion that are too prevalent. Associating religion almost exclusively with the contemplation of death, they think that it is more the concern of the aged and dying than of the young and healthy. Or they fancy that it consists only in praying, listening to sermons, and reading what are called "good books," and they feel that they are not constitutionally fitted for sustained thought and feeling. It is certainly not necessary for one who desires to be religious to adopt the mannerisms of thought and speech assumed by professedly "very good people," or to view the innocent amusements that brighten life with grudging acerbity.

The true view of religion is that it is required to ennoble and sanctify this present all-important life much more than as a mere memento of death. Dr. Newton was once speaking of a lady who had recently died. A young lady immediately asked, "Oh, sir, how did she die?" The venerable man replied, "There is a more important question than that, my dear, which you should have asked first." "Sir," said she, "what question can be more important than 'How did she die?'" "How did she live?" he replied. One of the favourite expressions of a godly man was in these words: "If I have grace to live by, so that I shall do what I ought to do, and omit what I ought not to do, I need have no concern about grace to die by. That will come when I need it." Very true. If we serve God in life, He will not forsake us in death.

How happy it was for herself and the world which she so greatly benefited that Elizabeth Fry did not consider religion to be only a death-bed ornament. In her sixty-seventh year she said to one of her daughters when she was suffering from the illness that took her to rest: "I can say one thing: since my heart was touched, at seventeen years old, I believe I have never awakened from sleep, in sickness or in health, by day or by night, without my first waking thought being how best I might serve my Lord."

The fact is the young require religion perhaps even more than the old, for their passions are stronger, and if not rightly directed can cause far greater ruin. An old man or an old woman can do comparatively little harm, but a young person, uninfluenced by the motives of religion, is a power for evil the greatness of which can scarcely be overestimated. Then we ought to consider that it is far easier to turn to God now than at any other time, and that delay in this matter is, to say the least, dangerous. "Turn to God one day before your death," said Rabbi Eliezer. His disciples said, "How can a man know the day of his death?" He answered them, "Then you should turn to God to-day; perhaps you may die to-morrow. Thus every day will be employed in turning."

Those who in this way "die daily" need fear no evil, even if in the sunny days of youth they are called upon to pass over the valley of the shadow of death. To them is applicable an epitaph which is in the cemetery at Tunbridge Wells on the tomb of a young girl aged sixteen :—

“Behold this flower, so young and fair,
Called hence by early doom,
Come forth to show how sweet a flower
In Paradise might bloom.”

If young people knew what religion is instead of trying how long they could do without it, they would feel that every year they lived at a distance from its “sweet reasonableness” was a year of their lives wasted—lived on a lower level than it might have been lived. If the Roman Emperor was justified in his remorseful reflection at the end of a day not spent in the best possible way, “I have lost a day,” how much greater reason will those have to say, “I have lost my youth,” who never think of God until their youth and strength are gone, and they have no more left for the service of the world, the flesh, and the devil. On condition of repentance, our loving Father may accept the wretched leavings of an used-up life, the feeble pulses of a heart that have never beaten for Him and duty; but is it not mean to offer Him only that? Does not His Spirit whisper to you that now is the time when you ought to take the Lord Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour? You are created in God’s image, and born for immortality. Are you prepared to spend in levity this golden season of youthful ardour, in the vain hope of repentance by and by, when the glow and charm of life shall have gone for ever?

Speaking of the Apostles who slept in Gethsemane, instead of preparing themselves as their Master did for the hour of trial, Robertson, of Brighton, says:—

“My young brethren—youth is one of the precious opportunities of life—rich in blessing if you choose to make it so, but having in it the materials of undying remorse, if you suffer

it to pass unimproved. Your quiet Gethsemane is now. Gethsemane's struggles you cannot know yet. Take care that you do not learn Gethsemane's sleep. Do you know how you can imitate the Apostles in their fatal sleep? You can suffer your young days to pass idly and uselessly away; you can live as if you had nothing to do but enjoy yourselves; you can let others think for you, and not try to become thoughtful yourselves, till the business and difficulties of life come upon you unprepared, and you find yourselves like men waking from sleep, hurried, confused, scarcely able to stand, with all the faculties bewildered, not knowing right from wrong, led headlong to evil, just because you have not given yourselves in time to learn what is good."

From this sleep of indifference the voice of your Saviour says, "Talitha cumi" ("My child, arise.")





CHAPTER XXVIII.

WOMEN'S RECREATIONS.

"Dora, sport, as now thou sportest
On this platform light and free ;
Take thy bliss, while longest, shortest
Are indifferent to thee.

"Who would check the happy feeling
That inspires the linnet's song ?
Who would stop the swallow, wheeling
On her pinions, swift and strong ?"

Wordsworth.

"Now look at the young English girl, setting out with some young fellows, and a troop of other girls as simply dressed as herself, to go to some distant field and play a game of lawn tennis. She values health. It is no compliment to say to an English girl : ' You eat like a little bird ; ' it would be a reproach."—*Max O'Rell in "John Bull and his Island."*



T. JOHN THE EVANGELIST, as Cassian relates, amusing himself one day with a tame partridge on his hand, was asked by a huntsman, How such a man as he could spend his time in so unprofitable a manner? to whom St. John replied, Why dost thou not carry thy bow always bent?

Because, answered the huntsman, if it were always bent, I fear it would lose its spring, and become useless. Be not surprised, then, replied the Apostle, that I should sometimes remit a little of my close attention of spirit to enjoy a little recreation, that I may afterwards employ myself more fervently in Divine contemplation." No sensible person is surprised that the most earnest and least frivolous woman should enjoy a little recreation. This being the case, we must say here a few words on the subject, lest readers of the foregoing chapters on the work and duties of women should shut the book and say, "All work and no play, if that is not good for Jack, neither is it for Jill."

Pleasure is to woman what the sun is to the flower; if moderately enjoyed, it beautifies, it refreshes and improves; if immoderately, it withers and destroys. "All religion," said an old divine, "is summed up in one short phrase, 'Serve God and be cheerful;'" but it is impossible to be cheerful if the bow is always kept bent and we never relax. The retrospect of life swarms with lost opportunities. Few of us have enjoyed as we ought the gift of life and the beautiful world we live in. We have not appreciated, and do not appreciate, at their full value the sacred trusts of health, strength, and time. Yet surely it is our duty to be as happy as we can. Some of our teachers err, in that they dwell on the duty of self-denial, but exhibit not the duty of delight. There are women who always see a black spot in their sunshine. It is their own shadow. They ought to reflect that to go out of their way to find a cross is as bad as to go out of their way to escape one.

Some of us know young ladies who don't sing, don't play,

don't care for music, don't read, don't ride, don't skate, don't play tennis, don't take an interest in anything. We are glad to say that women of this kind are becoming uncommon ; but some girls and women are much more easily amused than others. These are they whose hands are busy and whose hearts are free. The idle who make pleasure the business of their lives are incapable of an honest laugh. They are sick of themselves and of everything else through selfishness. They are in the condition in which an Irish orator said his countrymen were—"They don't know what they want, and they won't be satisfied till they get it." Though recreation is necessary for every one, a round of excitement fatigues mind and body. "No wonder," says Carlyle, "that poor women of fashion take to opium and scandal. The wonder is rather that these queens of the land do not some morning, struck by the hopelessness of their condition, make a general finish by simultaneous consent, and exhibit to coroners and juries the spectacle of the whole world of *ton* suspended by their garters, and freed at last from *ennui* in the most cheap and complete of all possible modes." *Ennui*, that "awful yawn which sleep cannot dispel," is the natural consequence of a life of mere pleasure, and is quite as intolerable as the dull monotony of an utterly joyless existence. What is wanted is the happy mean, a moderate amount of work, and a moderate amount of pleasure, and the work to precede the relaxation. Indeed, without work it is impossible, as the derivation of the word tells us, to have recreation. Our powers must first be worn out before they can be recreated or created afresh.

Out-of-door recreations used to be almost monopolized, like

every other good thing, by men ; but women are now very wisely practising them, having at last discovered that good digestion, sound sleep, and equal nerves can only be obtained by taking plenty of exercise in the open air. Indeed, there are some girls who go to the opposite extreme and exercise too much. When lawn tennis first came into fashion, medical men became quite alarmed because they saw that ladies, who are their most remunerative patients, were becoming so healthy that they were able to dispense with their services. But the use of a thing is generally followed by its abuse, so the ladies soon developed new tennis diseases by devoting themselves too much to the pastime, and the doctors breathed freely once more. We need not name all the out-of-door sports that are beneficial if wisely used. To be useful, walking exercise should be taken in company, so that the mind may not prey upon its own thoughts. Many young girls make the mistake of walking too much. Rowing and gymnastic lessons, if given by an experienced teacher, greatly improve the figure and the general health. Hunting, or any kind of riding on horseback, is expensive, but the tricycle is highly recommended by medical men. Some ladies have taken to shooting, but why slaughter poor birds when they can kill the lords of creation with a glance? Cricket is, we think, quite as suitable for ladies as tennis, and is a most cultivating game, training as it does eye, temper, wind, and limb.

Of indoor recreations dancing and billiards are among the most social, and afford healthy exercise, though there are temptations connected with them against which every good girl will be on her guard. We wish that it were the

fashion for dancing parties to begin and end at an earlier hour than they do, for it is impossible to dance all night and be fresh and ready for duty the next day, and every amusement ought to fit and not unfit us for work. Lady Bellairs says, "I once heard a young man advised, that when seeking for a wife, he should get himself asked to the house where the young lady he had taken a fancy to resided, and then carefully notice her personal appearance the morning following a ball or late party. If she showed herself at the early family breakfast "as fresh as a newly made pin," radiant with smiles, and able to make a good meal, he might be assured that she possessed two excellent attributes for a wife, good *physique* and temper. But should she not appear at the table, or enter late, then looking "washed out," and only playing with her food, he had better pack his portmanteau forthwith, and go—elsewhere for a wife." Let young women take the hint, and when dressing the morning after a party, ask themselves whether they look as fresh as they should. If not, they may be sure that they have remained too long, overeaten themselves at supper, danced too much, or in some other way abused what ought to have been a healthy amusement.

In the cause of humanity we protest against the notion that every young lady should practise on a piano a certain number of hours daily, whether music is or is not a recreation to her. "Three things," said Mozart, "are necessary for a good performer ;" and he pointed significantly to his head, to his heart, and to the tips of his fingers, as symbolical of understanding, sympathy, and technical readiness. Why should a girl who has not one of these qualifications be supposed to take pleasure in

music? It will always be a difficulty to her, and her friends will wish it were an impossibility.

"Yes," says Heine, writing of the piano, "the piano is the instrument of martyrdom whereby the present elegant world is racked and tortured for all its affectations. If only the innocent had not to endure it with them! (Alas! my neighbours next door, two young daughters of Albion, are at this moment practising a brilliant study for *two left hands*.)

"These sharp, rattling tones, without a natural 'dying fall'—these heartless, whirling tumults—this archi-prosaic rumbling and tinkling—this pianoforte mania kills all thought and feeling, and we grow stupid, insensible, and imbecile. This hand-over-hand dexterity of the piano—these triumphal processions of piano *virtuosi*—are characteristic of our time, and prove utterly the triumph of mechanical power over the soul. Technical ability, the precision of an automaton, identification with the wire-strung wooden machine—this sounding instrumentification of humanity, is now lauded and exalted as the highest attainment of man."

"No," said a sad-eyed man, "I never press a young woman to play upon the piano. I tried it once to my sorrow." "Why, what followed?" asked a half-dozen eager voices. "She played," replied the sad-eyed man. "I shall never forget the lesson I learned that day."

Many so-called amusements are so badly managed that they utterly fail to amuse. For example, the ordinary recreation of ordinary persons very much resolves itself into conversation. Yet how miserably stale, flat, and unprofitable, how utterly devoid of the salt of wit and wisdom is the conversation of

most of us ! Once when Bishop Thirlwall, who was deaf, was walking with a friend who knew the bishop's infirmity, the friend remarked, "It's wet, my lord bishop." "Eh?" said the bishop. "It's wet, my lord." "Eh?" repeated the bishop. The observation had to be made several times before the bishop could catch its meaning. "Strange how little one loses by being deaf!" he exclaimed. What a blessing that woman is to her friends, and how greatly she relieves the pressure of the burdens of life, who takes pains to direct conversation into interesting channels, and unselfishly tries to make it vivacious and agreeable!

After shutting up her house for some time, a woman used a weak tincture of iodine to stain herself and her children brown, and then succeeded in convincing all the neighbours that she had been to the seaside. Were not this woman and her family better at home than "enjoying" the seaside or travelling abroad in the silly, hurrying, uncomfortable way in which it is usually done? Certainly foreign travel may be one of the best and most intelligent forms of recreation, but it is this only when properly planned and conducted according to a wise method.

When we reach a period of recreation we should shun sights, if we honestly have no appetite for them. A man set off with the professed intention of visiting France. When he got to Dover he changed his mind; and, sitting down on the cliffs, looked at France across the channel. "Well," said his friends, when he returned, "and what do you think of the French?" "Much as I did," he replied, "only they appeared rather distant." He was not going to put himself out by doing

violence to his legitimate inclination when he went out for a holiday. He knew that what does good in a holiday is complete rest and change. So he declined seeing that which he intended to see, because it did not fall in with his humour.

Every man believes that he himself stands in need of recreation and a holiday, but there are some husbands who think that their wives should never want the same. Probably they want a little change far more, for as old Tusser says—

“Some respite to husbands the weather may send ;
But housewives' affairs have never an end.”

We quote the following case from a recent number of the *London Medical Record*:—“Mrs. M——, aged forty-four, mother of eight children, had acute mania. The husband, when asked if he could suggest any cause for her illness, exclaimed with much animation that he could not conceive any reason. ‘She is a most domestic woman ; is always doing something for her children, is always at work for us all ; never goes out of the house, even to church on Sunday ; never goes gadding about at the neighbours' houses, or talking from one to another ; has been one of the best of wives and mothers, and is always at home.’ The superintendent of the Hartford Retreat for the Insane (from the report of which institution this case is taken), in commenting on it, says : ‘This appreciative husband could hardly have furnished a more graphic delineation of the causes of his wife's insanity, had he understood them ever so thoroughly.’ ”

It is true that it is always difficult to make a wife and mother take a vacation. The better wife and mother she is,

the greater is the difficulty. She thinks that no one can take care of the house as she can. And she is right. She is sure that no one can take her place in the care of the children. Right again. Nevertheless, she needs her vacation, and she will be a better home-keeper and a better mother for a week's rest. The house will value her more for a week's abdication of her throne. Her children will appreciate her better for a week's laying down of her sceptre? Is she sometimes irritable? She is tired. Is she sometimes depressed and gloomy? She is over-worked and over-wearied. Send her off, or take her off, where she can sleep without keeping one ear open to hear the children uneasily tossing in their sleep; where she can sit down to a table that will present some unexpected dishes to her; where her night will be without dreams and her day without cares; where the blunders of servants will bring no self-reproaches, and she can even hear the crash of crockery without dismay. Such a vacation will take the tired look out of her eyes and put the old light back again; it will give the rippling merriment of girlhood to her laugh, elasticity to her step, colour to her cheek. Woman's power of recuperation is wonderful, if it has but half a chance.

One of the best kinds of recreation is some hobby whereby we ride or drive out of the ruts of our common life. It may be a very cheap and humble one; it may seem trifling. Our knowledge, for instance, of botany, chemistry, geology, or other 'ologies, may be very small, but it is astonishing what an interest may be given to even the commonest walk by the knowledge of some of the mere rudiments of science. George Henry Lewes, the well-known writer and man of science, was

one day dredging a roadside pond. A glass jar stood by him, and into it he put all his "finds." Presently an Irish labourer came to him and inquired with a sneer whether he was fishing for salmon. Mr. Lewes quietly said, "Yes." But the man did not go away, and when Mr. Lewes's net landed a big black and yellow triton the Irishman's curiosity was fairly aroused. He saw the many other living things which the jar held, and as to which he asked many questions, all kindly answered. The labourer stayed till Mr. Lewes had to leave, and his remark now was, "Och ! then, and it's a fine thing to be able to name all God's creatures." It's a fine thing for a mother to be able to name God's creatures when taking walks with her children. Nothing will cause her to be more respected, especially by the boys, than ability to answer their questions concerning the creatures they find in ditches or on the seashore. It was a constant habit of the mother of the philosopher Kant to take him when a boy into the country for walks, and make him observant of the beautiful things in nature, and speak to him of the wonderful works of God. This she did in so sweet and attractive a manner as to make these walks the happiest part of his young life, and always remembered by him as such.

The other day I was walking with my little boy, aged six years, along the seashore. After showing me shells, pieces of seaweed, and other marine specimens, and asking me many more questions about them than I was able to answer, he looked at me for a minute or two in silent wonder, and then said, "Well, I never met a man so ignorant in all my life." Not only at that moment, but at many other times when taking

pleasant walks, I regretted that I had not learned to make a relaxation out of the observation of natural objects—flowers, shells, trees, the habits of birds, animals, and insects. If we qualified ourselves more for an interest in nature by that which is essential to such interest, a slight knowledge of nature which is God's pure work unsullied by sin, there would be among us much more purity, and therefore much more brightness and joyousness of mind. We must not, however, make too much of what may be called scientific recreation. Many women have no natural liking for it, no tastes in that direction. And for these the recreative change lies in direct play of some kind or another that is innocent and not unsuitable to girls and women. This change, this play, is as indispensable to the wholesome revival of her powers as the material which repairs the fabric of her body, and the sleep which "knits up the unravelled sleeve of care."

Addressing a young lady, Sydney Smith says, "Do you ever reflect how you pass your life? If you live to seventy-two, which I hope you may, your life is passed in the following manner:—An hour a day is three years. This makes twenty-seven years sleeping, nine years dressing, nine years at table, six years playing with children, nine years walking, drawing, and visiting, six years shopping, and three years quarrelling."

Opinions differ about the relative merits of the different kinds of relaxation here enumerated. As regards sleep, the best rule is that it should come quickly, be intense while it lasts, and cease quickly and completely; quite awake or quite asleep; no hovering between the two; no need of or desire for a little more slumber, a little more sleep. "When one

turns in bed, it is time to turn out," whether rightly or wrongly attributed to the Duke of Wellington, is a saying worthy of him, and accords with the energy that contributed to make his life great as well as long.

About dressing we have said all that we have to say in a previous chapter. Occasionally, during the nine years we are at table, it would be well to remember the proverb which says that what we leave at table does us more good than what we eat. Six years of life could scarcely be better employed than in playing with children. Exercises that take us out of ourselves are better than walking alone. Drawing cultivates the eye and hand. We are not so sure of the usefulness of visiting. Scandal and low gossip may render it absolutely wicked. Shopping is a very expensive amusement, as fathers and husbands know to their cost. Three years spent in quarrelling is surely three years lost. One way of avoiding quarrelling is to resolutely determine not to belong to any clique, and not to form very violent intimacies. We know, of course, that the quarrels of schoolgirls are often like the quarrels of lovers, the renewal of love. Still, the time and temper that is wasted in quarrelling are excessive, and might be spared if we did not form friendships too quickly. Easy come, easy go, is true of friendships that are very rapid.

THE END.

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